WHAT IS NEW THEOLOGY?

JOHN PAUL

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What is new theology?

What is New Theology?

By JOHN PAUL, D. D.
OF ASBURY COLLEGE
LECTURER FOR INTERDENOMINATIONAL CONVENTIONS, JAPAN,
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INTRODUCTION.

The author of this volume preceded his effort with lateral readings and review work in science, philosophy and theology intended to lead up to a large volume or two of systematic theology. With all deference to the superior works we now have in systematic theology, it was thought a work was needed from an evangelical source which addressed itself more to the new points of emphasis and the issues which have arisen from these new angles of discussion. The so-called liberal works in systematic theology, which lay principal claim to the field so far as new publications are concerned, have narrowed the province of the subject. In keeping with the modern method of specialization, they have broken it up into many topics, some to be handled by scientists, some by linguists, some by sociologists or historians, and some by preachers. It is implied that one individual takes too much upon himself when he undertakes to adhere to the old method of presenting the tenets of theology in a comprehensive system. While there is a defence for this new division of labor in the field of theological literature, it is believed by many that a comprehensive approach to the great subject offers peculiar advantage to the average reader.

But we have turned aside from our task to deal first with the vitals of our subject, in undertaking to introduce our readers to the new theology sifter and call attention to the old theology wheat. We would not be so conceited as to liken this little volume to Moses' challenge, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Yet the book is confessedly a feeler for the theological pulse of the hour, and its writer desires to hear personally from every one who reads, even if the expression is adverse. We venture to assure the reader that this is an unsectarian exposition of those verities of religion without which no church may have final success; and that, though our illustrations and methods of approach may be new, the volume contains no eccentric views in religion, while in its science it takes care to exclude everything that the scientists *know* to be incorrect, though many of them may *think* differently. It is expected that every reader who believes in the fundamentals of the gospel will find here reflections which will refresh his faith, and that those who think the formula of orthodoxy needs to be rewritten will find themselves in an arena of fair and healthy discussion for testing the soundness of their own views.

In these chapters we undertake to offer a statement of the case. Whether we shall go on and produce the extended work in systematic theology depends upon providential indi-

cations. Is it needed? If needed, will some one better qualified, or with more leisure to do the work, be raised up to supply the need? This writer is quite willing to let the small volume here introduced end his part of the task by serving as a kind of signal in the theological mulberry trees. It assumes to furnish to its readers the gist of thought which they may need to write their own chapters or build their own sermons, and it may be that divine providence will indicate individuals to write the chapters and build the sermons needed, and leave the architect of this small blue print at liberty to go on with an evangelistic message.

Our first thought was to have an introductory expression from serious chief pastors of the several evangelical denominations. There are such, in every church, who are deeply concerned with the light manner in which the fundamentals of Bible Christianity are being revised at the behest of an uncertain modern philosophy. Some have read our advance chapters, and have evidenced a willingness to lend them such a seal of approval. It is not conceit that has made us avoid this; but, in keeping with the above explanation, a desire that in its first editions the work should be like Gideon's fleece of wool, getting responses on the merit or demerit of its pages, without a borrowed prestige.

Wilmore, Ky. JOHN PAUL.

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(1.) What is the "position of modern science" (vide French work for Comte's idolatry of Science) — see his hierocracy of Science.)

(2.) Why amenable to only these two principles? Show how these two are only "working assumptions".

(3.) Anti-supranatural.

(4.) Revelation only thus the natural order in general revelation: satisfactories.

(5.) The dilemma [illegible] perceived. a 100 per cent

CHAPTER I.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

By the new theology we mean that system of Christian doctrine, identifying itself as theistic, which is entirely amenable to the position of modern science; especially to those assumptions of induction known as *the conservation of energy* and the *uniformity of nature;* and to the doctrine which is the historic outgrowth of these assumptions, namely, the evolution of the earth and its inhabitants. By a process of analogy, the whole scheme of origins is brought over from the physical to the social, religious and political, and made to dovetail with data which seems to confirm the theory. The injection of new forces, under the head of the *supernatural,* is impossible in the premises. The ethics of the ten commandments could not have been handed down from Sinai by the Almighty, nor could any other epoch-making contribution have come in from outside the natural order. Many in the evangelical field who undertake thus to defend the integrity of natural law and find common ground for evolution and revelation will think our boundaries too sharp in

defining new theology; but anything less than one hundred per cent consistency in this field is inconsistency. A new theology that leaves a niche for the spiritual or the supernatural is new theology improperly so-called.

Let it not be supposed that we question the common ground of true religion and true science. There is no area which they would dispute, any more than there could be an area disputed by sunlight and atmosphere. Atmosphere is a mundane quantity and sunlight is a solar quantity; but the earth and the sun were devised by the same architect. We have no fanatical brief to maintain against evolution. The point is this: The conservation of energy and the uniformity of nature explain all that exists today and determine all that shall take place tomorrow, or they do not. Clearly, there is no middle ground.

LAISSEZ FAIRE RELIGION.

While the big interests of German, English and American culture have furnished us men with nothing to lose or to fear, who do not trim from the new theology any of its logical implications, the evangelical schools have furnished us some grown men in the new theology, who can eat its strong meats, but who recognize the need of giving milk to them that are not of full age; hence the form

of the new theology as we find it in the seminaries and Biblical departments of colleges of evangelical churches does not answer literally to our definition. This is not because our definition is wrong, but because they have arbitrarily modified the system of new theology, under the influence of the yet unspent momentum of orthodox traditions. There is here a more sympathetic type of teachers of the new theology, who refuse to be ruthless. They believe in journeying gently with the tender children and the flocks and herds. Unlike the Esaus of rationalism, they feel that their crude brethren of the old school are worth saving. They speak caressingly of the old tenets, and make a place for them that are too deeply rooted as yet to be uprooted. This form of diplomacy or casuistry is given ethical standing by no less an authority than Herbert Spencer, who says in his autobiography:

"I have come more and more to look calmly on forms of religious belief to which I had in earlier days a pronounced aversion. Holding that they are in the main naturally adapted to their respective peoples and times, it now seems to me that they should severally live and work as long as the conditions permit, and further, that sudden changes of religious institutions, as of political institutions, are certain to be followed by reactions."

The people who submit to these modifications, these mixtures of wool and linen in the

same garment, do not care to have their teaching classed as "new theology"; but permanent bodies of philosophy or theology go in systems, each part related to the others, and constituting a strong argument if not an absolute proof for the other parts in the system. Any point that does not thus fit into a system of teaching may at its worst be incompatible; but, it may abide in the system as innocent alien matter, harmless in the absence of inflammation, like a splinter encysted in the flesh of a man, which got there in his childhood. Such is the doctrine of angels, good or evil; for which science has no place. Such is the thought of a separable entity in man, known as the soul. In this list come miracles and all forms of supernaturalism, as: divine providence, the immediate operation of God's Spirit in conviction, regeneration or assurance; answers to prayer, excepting as in mere subjective consequences; the inspiration of the Scriptures; the miraculous element in prophecy; the preternaturalness of the origin of sin; the doctrine of divine judgment, with its logic of rewards and penalties; the supernaturalness of the birth of Christ and his divine person; the Biblical doctrine of atonement for sin. Not one of these "traditional" positions has a consistent place in the new theology, but it may readily be seen

that all these conceptions cannot be uprooted at one stroke. Indeed there are scholarly men, with reverence for the past, for whom the new theology has charms, but whose whole nature would revolt against a proposal to renounce all these incompatible old tenets. But these old doctrines are excrescences in the new theology, the tenets of which, under present day prestige, are so much more virile that the old doctrines tend to slough away or protrude so conspicuously that they have to be pruned away. The strain in a mongrel breed which decides the classification will cause all other kinships gradually to be forgotten; nor is that strain always the superior strain. It has been observed that the evolution of the new theology usually requires more than one generation; that what a teacher with "liberal" tendencies cannot himself spare, can be easily dispensed with by his diciples and cordially antagonized by their disciples. The regressive evolution from orthodoxy to new theology, if evolution it is, has illustrative specimens in all stages, each in his ecclesiastical stratum; from the slightest reshapement to the handsomest reconstructed state.

THE AGE OF ORIGINALITY.

Enough of the mental bacteria of our new age has entered the psychology of educated

orthodoxy to remove its maiden reserve, its primitive tenseness, in the presence of critical deliverances on fundamental truth, and to save it from strained literalism. In the name of this improvement, the new theology camel often gets his head into the orthodox tent. The inability of the average preacher and Bible teacher to distinguish an interpretation or doctrine which fits only in the new theology system leads to an undefined sense of awkwardness, a want of mental rest, when once such a doctrine is accepted. In course of time this will culminate in a virtual surrender to the new theology as a system. The awkward situation may be endured for one generation, but the next generation will probably find relief along the line of least resistance. Throwing tradition to the winds they will enforce consistency in the body of their doctrines.

The arbitrary way is often the easier way to hold a doctrine, even when that doctrine is true. The habit of eliminating all misfits, of putting nothing but round pegs in round holes, of requiring comity between the neighboring units in a body of doctrine—in short, the ability to escape the necessity of doing business partly upon borrowed or reflected convictions is thought to belong only to a few profound theologians. In the true situation, it should be popularized. We should seek in

the Church a high level of enlightenment, where the average disciple of Christ can see his faith as a system and be able to sense every vain philosophy that is incompatible with faith.

When an individual has a derived conviction, when he believes a thing because of his breeding, because it represents the atmosphere in which he became a Christian, or the school in which he was educated, we say that the reason for his belief is psychological rather than logical. We cannot deny that such a basis of belief may be valid and useful. Science or Scriptural truth may be held this way, just the same as error; doctrines that bless, the same as doctrines that blight. But a man who holds a true doctrine for psychological reasons, who accordingly lacks originality in his convictions, suffers two disadvantages. He will not be intelligently aggressive, and he will not be proof against encroachments. Referring to the former, a conviction must be part of a man before he can represent it with due effect; he must not only have it, but it must have him. A man who holds a position understandingly and consistently will not be wanting in the psychological ground of his faith, but is the more irresistible in his conclusions because he has "the reason of the hope" in him. To illustrate the latter disad-

vantage, a Calvinist of the psychological type may accept or reject any of the "five points" at will. He can teach final perseverance and reject unconditional election or irresistible grace; or, he can teach unconditional election and reject limited atonement, without suffering a moment of mental unrest in the fact that he has bisected his system and let in principles that cannot be assimilated. An eclectic theologian is like a nurseryman who tries to graft a mulberry branch into a walnut stock. Faith has its psychology and its logic; it is not good for these to be put asunder and one of them to be alone. The faith that lacks originality of conviction is quite becoming and efficient in a child, or in one whose status must needs be like that of a child. But if it is a faith worth promoting, the time is due to come, in all normal instances, when it must be one's own, by which the fitness and unfitness of every thought that is companion to it will be adjudged, and such thoughts accordingly will be rejected or espoused. Thus are we to be invulnerable on the one hand and irresistible on the other.

It is not forgotten that bigots who ride a hobby without any sense of orientation are sometimes "invulnerable" and "irresistible", and that in bringing all Scripture to serve their point of contention, and repelling every

counsel that crosses their preachments, they seem to illustrate in more immediate perspective the thought developed in the latter part of this chapter. But they only illustrate this thought as a counterfeit bill illustrates a genuine. A bigot is one whose convictions are intensive without being comprehensive; whose belief is more in the nature of an obsession, which unfits him to estimate the harmonies of thought, puts a temperamental bias in his exegesis, and tends to make him intolerant and impatient of contradiction. A man is not a bigot because he maintains powerful convictions. Something is bound to be definitely true; and when a man has powerful convictions he may be living just where a man ought to live.

CHAPTER II.

EVOLUTION AND FAITH.

If we are permitted to assume some uncertainty in regard to that doctrine of evolution which so largely holds the viewpoint of the average author of text books in science and philosophy today, the uncertainty must transfer itself immediately to the new theology, and its pressure must fall equally upon almost every part of the system. We shall, therefore, deem it in keeping with the unity of this book to insert here some considerations on the status of the doctrine of evolution down to date. The appropriateness of this is more apparent when we remember that the new theology has eliminated its departments on cosmology and anthropology and passed them over to be decided and explained as branches of natural science, refusing to have a voice in the decision. Even those not wholly committed to the rationalistic program have adopted this method,* thus showing their whole-hearted faith in science and in the illuminated judg-

*For illustration of this, see "An Outline of Christian Theology" by William Newton Clarke, D.D., p. 222 f.

ment of scientists, even upon questions which are beyond the reach of scientific analysis.

That there is something true in evolution we need not undertake to deny. But we shall not need to rehearse any arguments in defense of this concession. As the library shelves are groaning with arguments favoring evolution in its full twentieth century connotation, we can afford to reserve the space in this book to examine its weak points. In recent years, a directly adverse view has been hard to find among teachers of good attainment in scientific thought. Since the last decades of the nineteenth century the bold materialism of the doctrine has been greatly softened, and its atheistic notes largely silenced. Until it showed these better tendencies, its influence among theologians of the conservative school was scarcely discernible; but in the last third of a century the new alignment in text books and modes of thought has been almost cataclysmic in most of the leading evangelical seminaries. There is an impressive paradox in the fact that "old" theology means less than fifty years old in evangelical Christendom; that the definite revision of everything to match the hypothesis of evolution has proved to be a veritable revolution. Some reasonable doubt might be pre-

sumed as to the dependableness of a new position reached almost by stampede when that new position is so far reaching as to require the digging away of materials which but yesterday were unanimously acknowledged to be the essential foundation of Christianity.

THE BLENDING OF FACT AND FICTION.

The story of biological evolution, heard of, is uninviting; but actually heard, it may possess a hypnotic charm. Darwin's fascinating style gave this beautiful fable a momentum in thought by which it has assumed the attributes of reality for many who write upon it today. It has become an affair of the heart with certain great scholars, and their primitive religious instinct, formerly inhibited for want of terms in which to express itself, bursts forth in eloquence as it pronounces its eureka over what they willingly conclude to be a harmonious, self-consistent hypothesis. Enforced with series for motion screens and picture books, with missing links filled in by invention, showing the progress of organic life from a protozoan to a United States Senator, evolution bids fair to become a part of the average man's creed for several generations. As a story estimated by a standard of facts, and taken from its alpha to its omega, the evolutionary hypothesis

ranks half way between *Jack and the Bean Stalk* and the engineering of the pyramids. It is sustainable at certain points and it floats in the air at other points. But it is one of those departments of conception where the imaginative easily fuses with the historic and the mind instinctively gives historic relief to the entire composition.

Since the acceptance of evolution as a principle in the scientific world there has been quite a checking up and revision of views, as the specialist in physics showed a doctrine that would not work, or the specialist in chemistry broke down an "explanation," or the specialist in astronomy found a conflicting fact, or the specialist in geology made a new survey, or the specialist in biology became exceedingly frank, or the specialist in archaeology unfolded yesterday's comment upon the "psychozoic" millenniums. Consequently, the schools contain no fifty-year-old text books in science, and no scientist believes there will be any fifty-year-old science texts in the schools fifty years hence, or a thousand years hence.

The "old" science, fifty years ago or less, believed in the nebular hypothesis as an explanation of the origin of the solar system; but this was upset by modern physics, and displaced by a belief "dynamically more satisfactory," that the sun was the original

posit,* and that a tidal disruption was caused in the sun by a passing star, and thus were the planets and asteroids formed. This is accepted as a resort, in face of the admitted fact presented by the specialist in mathematics, that our sun has only one chance in 1,800 of having been near any star in the last billion years;† but it is conceded that our sun may have drawn the lucky number. Other difficulties have to be met in this more recent, and, we may grant, more probable hypothesis as to how God made the worlds, but we will leave the student to read of these elsewhere. Suffice to say that this theory had to have a supplement in the theory of the "growth of the earth," which also is plausible, and meets the requirement until finite man can develop something better. It assumes that in the disruption of the sun by a passing star the region between the sun and Neptune's present orbit was filled with material from the size of dust to the size of an asteroid. That gradually, as conjunctions of position were favorable, the molten earth, through thousands or millions of years, it is not yet agreed which, grew from

*We shall not go back to the more mythical phase of the newer hypothesis, which traces the origin of the hot orb from cold, dark materials, scattered through space. The theory of tidal disruption is not new; but in its revised statement, as accepted today, it is a recent annex to scientific hypothesis.

†Lecture by Prof. Joseph Barrell, of Yale University, in "The Evolution of the Earth and Its Inhabitants", p. 23.

about half its present diameter and one-eighth of its present volume, until in its heated condition it was from two to four hundred miles greater in diameter than it is today.

THE NEW GEOLOGY.

It may be profitable here to tabulate a list of the statements, representing the position of the "newer geology" at this date upon how the present world evolved from the situation presented in the above paragraph.

During the molten condition of the earth, the outer crust of its substance where the continents now stand was, as it is now, a little lighter than where the seas now are;* and, before the cooling and chemical transformations which formed water, the ocean beds sank and the continents rose. The old Geology is declared to be wrong in teaching that continents have changed their position.

Volcanic conditions, of which we still have small lingerings, were common, as the crust formed and the molten matter repeatedly broke through the increasing pressure. This condition continued, covering not less than one-eighth of geologic time. Possibly forty million years after the earth was "grown."

In view of the assumption that the volume

*The specific gravity of the beds of the sea now averages about three per cent more than that of the continents; but, instead of this causing the seas, may it not be due to the condensing, consolidating effect of the seas?

of water has increased, it is believed that the continents were at one time near twenty-five per cent larger than now. By erosion the continents constantly flow out into the sea, making sea shelves which displace the water, which, in turn flows over the lower parts of the continents, to find room for its displaced volumes. Hence we have the historic "transgressions of the sea."

The earth has shrunk in diameter from two hundred to four hundred miles, from six to twelve hundred in its girth, since it "grew." This has taken place in epochs, including several minor readjustments and at least six major, in which new mountain ranges were formed and continents were in some instances literally lifted for miles, to be dragged down through another geological cycle. The time intervening between these major readjustments, according to the latest authorities, would seem to range from ten million to a hundred million years. The calculation is based mainly upon the length of time necessary for the dissolution of rocks, to produce the present percentage of salt in the sea.* Fifty or sixty miles must have been the aggregate lift, as, according to their calculation, this much of continental crust has been dissolved in the geological ages. It

*But is it not possible that the young earth fostered immense mines of sodium chlorid on its original surface? If so, would not this basis of calculation be valueless?

has not been "long," possibly a few hundred thousand years, since the last major readjustment, as all of the continents are now "standing far higher above sea level than has been the rule throughout geologic time." The ice ages have been due to these epochal continental elevations and the rarity of atmosphere, though some admitted difficulties remain at this point.

LIFE PROBLEMS ARE DISTINCTIVE.

Thus far in the premises we are not asked to believe anything that violates any known law of nature, nor is it contrary to the word of God to assume that matter and force have been in existence for measureless ages past. Furthermore, we do not have a right to fly in the face of facts and say that there has been no evolution in the vegetable and animal subkingdoms and in human society; but we should not be asked to ignore the equally potent law of regressive evolution and the other laws of spiritual and moral inertia which have in all time circumscribed the human race, excepting as we got help direct from our Maker; nor should any theory demand our patronage when it forbids us to heed nature's immutable proclamation that all progress must be within the impassable boundary lines of the species, which we are taught were created by divine fiat, and the denial of which upon purely hypothetical

grounds is intolerable presumption. Not that we would deny to anyone the personal privilege of regaling himself with Darwinian speculations upon the origin of the species, so long as he does not demand that these speculations shall be standardized and enforced through educational channels as a part of the thought life of our children, and so long as his theory does not vaunt itself as a militant opinion, proposing destruction to the religious faith which has been the chief factor in producing the greatest civilization the world has ever known.

We are required to grant that there are many more species today than existed at the beginning of historic times. But these have usually been developed, not spontaneously, but under the direction of rational mind; and they are not species in the fundamental sense. More species of dogs or chickens or bugs or cabbage or melons simply means a looser employment of the term, which makes a genus out of the real species and gives the dignity of species to various subspecies which are not susceptible of having impassable boundaries created between them. If a Plymouth Rock chicken is "species" number one and a game is "species" number two, "species" number three can be produced in less than a year, by combining these and obliterating their boundary.

The origin of such "species," therefore, has nothing to do with evolution in the technical use of that word, but is due to another set of laws in which the time element varies, and where the word evolution, though often used, is a misnomer.

A recent re-reading of the effort of great scientists to account for the origin of life reminds us that we are no nearer the solution of this mystery than they were in the days of Aristotle. The strained hypothesis of highly compounded chemicals on the bosom of the warm sea water and of life germs riding in upon meteorites are discarded as untenable or as merely shifting the problem to a more remote shore, and the frank admission is made that the origin of life is possibly involved in some metaphysical explanation.*

HELP FROM HIGHER UP.

On the point of regressive evolution, naturalists observe a widely prevailing uniformity in the vegetable and animal kingdom, which expresses itself in the decline of most any species or group left to itself, whether it be a patch of strawberries or a tribe of human beings. They try to account for this in such high sounding terms as over-specialization, but it is a weird law residing in mystery, a mute but stubborn answer to the

*Lecture on "The Origin of Life" by Prof. Lorande Loss Woodruff. Ibid p. 86.

hasty conclusions which we find in the speculative realm of science. It is found, on the other hand, that almost all upward development, illustrative of progressive evolution, among plants, animals and men, is due to outside aid, supplementing and manipulating the potential laws embosomed in the species or tribe. Thus are the finest fruits, vegetables and flowers developed; thus are the best animals produced, and to this do the best illustrations of human civilization owe their existence, without a proved exception. The Biblical assumption is that the pre-Christian nations which possessed a civilization got their cue or contribution: (1) from an ancestry in fellowship with their Maker, or (2) from a direct revelation of God, or (3) from another nation which got its help in one of the two ways. We calculate that the ascent which any of them took would have been impossible under nature's uniformity as everywhere illustrated today, except there had been with them an exotic influence; an agency, personal or impersonal, which, though *in* them, was not *of* them. Always, where progress is the watchword, the creature has, figuratively or literally, an upward look; the look is not *backward*, to some metaphysical god of mystery that planted its original seed, but to an ever present higher agency, whose intervention to water the plant seems as es-

sential to progress as was the germ of the original planting. That higher agency in the non-rational universe is usually man; in the rational universe it is God, or else it is a more advanced race or tribe who derived their facilities of advancement directly or indirectly from God. In the Christian centuries, all that is best in human advancement harks back to Jesus Christ.

Out of the identity of all protoplasm, the similarity of all cell life, the similarity of blood, the similarity in the anatomy of certain creatures, and the similarity of life functionings and reproduction, coupled with the very skimpy and sometimes contradictory illustrations of the fossil world, the philosophy of the spontaneous origin of the species is composed. In estimating the length of the inductive leap in reaching this conclusion men are usually influenced by the atmosphere in which they do their thinking. That the conclusion does not have a one hundred per cent existence in the premises, that an inductive leap is necessary, all serious thinkers will admit. Nor does a man have to live in an atmosphere of superstition and ignorance for the leap to seem too long to be logical. All these things prove the *fact* of unity in the source of animate creation, but where we employ the same data to prove the *form* or method by which that "Source"

gave us these species, we must read into our data conclusions which are not there. It is entirely rational for us to exercise faith in revelation's statement that God made them. It is not irreverent for man to pry into the *modus operandi* of creation, but he should not permit his prejudice or his irreligious predisposition to cause him to forget that his field is inevitably speculative, for all time to come, that schemes have been worked out in other generations by brilliant minds who became arrogantly sure of their ground, but that their conclusions are now as grotesque to him as his will appear to scholars a few generations hence.

PRACTICAL RESULTS OF THE THEORY.

Many have undertaken to estimate the practical effect of the doctrine of the spontaneous origin of the species, when educated society loses consciousness of its hypothetical character and begins to confuse it with the verified tenets of science.

First of all, it exerts a super-normal strain on the joints of human judgment, in those students who try at once to hold on to their Bibles and to keep "up with the times." The strain is so great that many yield their faith, under their imagined necessity of surrendering to the decree of "science."

Evolution as thus stated furnishes us a decree with reference to the philosophic rela-

tion of all historic events, and the origin of all institutions of society, the Hebrew and Christian religion not excepted. This decree is iron clad, and alternatives or parallel assumptions can no more be tolerated than could a Quaker be admitted to heaven by a strong advocate of baptismal regeneration. Thus we have a form of "higher criticism," as discussed in another chapter, which, though devoutly accepted by some susceptible religious people who would rather be dead than out of the fashion, was devised to harmonize with the assumption that the institution of religion as represented in the Old and New Testament did not come to man by means of divine revelation, but in the process of evolution; which by its own criterion of consistency feels compelled to iron every contrary indication out of Biblical history and out of the history of Biblical books.

"The survival of the fittest" grew as a theory out of the doctrine of spontaneous origins. Unlike the latter, there is much in nature to illustrate it, if illustrations could provide sufficient proof. Because it is so available as a text from which to expound a philosophy of life, the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, traced to its sequences, is found to be a medium for raising evolution into a working force. If there is no intelligent providence presiding over the phenome-

na of creation, if all the changes of the natural world are due to an unfolding of energies residing within the creature or in nature, competition must be as truly a law as is the unfolding, and also as sacred. If "duty" is merely another name for compulsory compliance with necessary law, and if the strong do compete successfully with the weak in the sub-kingdoms of vegetation and animal life, it is the duty of intelligent beings, where collision of rights is threatened, to fit themselves better than their competitors and destroy the competitors. If evolution of the species is true, evolution of political, social, and religious institutions is also true; and if might was the only argument for rights in the lower realm it must at least be legitimately the final argument for one's rights in the higher realm. Thus are we brought within a short step of the doctrine that might is right; and, while few leaders have permitted their lips to pronounce that doctrine in plain terms, some have lived up to it; and its subtle influence in certain systems of education is held by various writers* to have entered into the main causes of the world's greatest war. There is a way to evade the doctrine that might is right and still hold the doctrine of spontaneous generation. This is done by introducing the supremacy of the

*Cf. "The Science of Power." By Benjamin Kidd; p. 62 ff.

principle of sacrifice and service over force. This evasion is by a very narrow margin, and is hardly valid without a doctrine of divine interposition; but it has produced a distinction between the national policies of the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon peoples. While the Teutonic people have been more true to the logic of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, the English speaking world has escaped its worst consequences simply because Anglo-Saxons are more practical than logical.

Only outside or superior forces can prevent the operation of a grim law of the survival of the fittest, with its conclusion that might is right. But since we recognize everywhere the presence of Him who controls the wind and flood and knows the sparrow's fall, our faith refuses to ascribe the dignity of a "law" to the mere coincidence of the survival of the fittest, however replete may be its illustrations. "The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and 'chance' happeneth to them all"* and "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another."†

*Ecclesiastes 9:11.
†Psalm 75:6, 7.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOD OF THE NEW THEOLOGY.

"Theistic evolution" must draw the line at spontaneous generation, with its logical sequence in religion, or blunt its perception of truth and lose its soul. Current developments are serving constantly to illustrate the truth of this assertion.

In recent centuries, many new lessons have been learned by reading the oracles of nature, God's other book. In the light of a fancied conflict between nature and revelation some scientists who were not religiously inclined have grown arrogant; and some churchmen who were not scientifically inclined have become panic stricken. The latter was due either to an unconscious weakness of faith in the divinity of the Scriptures or a stupid assumption that there was lack of unity in the universe of truth. A few devout patriarchs thought that a general belief that the sun was the center of the solar system would send all the Bibles to the garret. A zealous church tribunal wanted to anathematize a man when he advanced the induction that the behavior of Uranus implied the existence of an eighth planet. Seven was

a sacred number; and any cold hearted worldling who disturbed people in this valuable collateral of faith would hurt the cause of religion as well as spoil man's appreciation of "the music of the spheres." But the discovery of Neptune grew out of this, and the Christian faith stands firm as ever; and the heavens declare the glory of God with a majesty that fails not with the flight of years.

Evolution in its modern meaning, as first expounded in the nineteenth century by Haeckel and his kind, was atheistic. A certain class of more alert and sensitive Christian thinkers feared it as an itinerant peddler would fear a prairie fire. At the first challenge it seemed like a death struggle. To the sanguine believers it would finally mean the death of an evolutionary philosophy; to the despondent, the death of Christian theistic faith. For a while, in many circles, there was no thought of assimilation or compromise. But atheistic evolution had scarcely begun to utter its brusque tones when it met with answers so conclusive that its champions vanished, or lost the ear of the thinking world, and theistic evolution was accorded the courtesies of the arena.

Apprehensive, and not knowing just how much of their old articles of faith would have to be dismantled, an influential element

of Christian scholars availed themselves of this opportunity to make terms and conclude a compromise which would enable them to hold caste with higher education in its new attitude. Naturally, there could be no concert of action among the various segments of Christian thinkers to determine what concessions must be made to square up with facts, or where the line should be drawn in the interest of facts already in their possession. Some were like a man unacquainted with the markets, trying in war time to buy a suit of clothes from profiteers, when its actual value was seventy-five dollars and the merchant had it marked five hundred dollars. After a distressing argument, the customer agreed to a price of two hundred and fifteen dollars and fifty cents and went home with a triumphant feeling.

EVOLUTION AND PROGRESS NOT IDENTICAL.

A "theistic evolution" that substitutes an unproved ascent of man for the necessary truth of divine creation must so revise its idea of God as to make him purely a creature of the human imagination. It must adduce a private interpretation of the Bible that makes the God of Genesis inferior to the God of Paul's epistles. It must hold a theory with reference to the inspiration of the Scriptures which denies them the dignity of a revelation from God and makes each book

of the Bible merely a reflection of the age in which it was produced.

This is one of several turns taken by the new theology which appear to have something in fact on which to hang its conclusions. It is a fact that the requirements of divine law in each succeeding age as represented in the Bible are in advance of the preceding age; that divine judgments are administered differently and on a more advanced plane in each age; that in the standard of worship for the new dispensation the appeal to the senses by symbols of faith is at a minimum, and spiritual excellencies take the place of material splendor; that in each era God seems to have been bringing the human custodians of his revelation steadily to the advanced plane which should characterize the age ahead of them.

These are facts which lend themselves to the imagination of those already convinced that man ascended from the level of lower animals, and that the ages of biological history contain some kind of tropic of cancer or capricorn marking his passage into the estate of a human being, at which time, whether gradually or in the presence of some august ceremony, man's "Maker" imparted to him a living soul. This extraordinary feature has to be injected into the scheme of evolution by those who would unite Chris-

tianity and spontaneous origins; a thing which must be very amusing to the non-Christian evolutionist, and a position so inarticulate in itself that it affords a stumbling-stone, causing many a new theologian to "backslide" during his study of functional psychology, and cease from trying to correlate his "science" and his "religion."

JEHOVAH, THE SAME IN EVERY AGE.

A fuller consideration of the evolutionist's assumption that each book of the Bible is a reflection of the age in which it is written will be given in our chapter on the "Authority of the Bible"; but we will here take time to observe that the Scriptures, when intelligently interpreted, furnish no support for the statement that our idea of God is evolved. The Bible professes the very opposite. Man is represented as getting his idea of God from God himself, by direct revelation. That man, because of sin, was slow to apprehend God's will or comprehend his attributes is recognized throughout, and that a "lost" race was dealt with on its own plane, borne with, instructed, and brought forward from one dispensation to another on progressive scales, is an express admission which the Bible makes. But it requires a most cunning invention to show that the standards and methods of the succeeding eras prove differences in God and set forth the evolution

of the idea of God. The God who winked at men's errors in the times of their ignorance* held the same standards then that he did when he commanded all men everywhere to repent. While ceremonial laws, with profound objects of tuition and discipline, were made to vary with the centuries, one will seek in vain for a fundamental moral law in the New Testament that is annulled by divine approval in the Old. The New Testament goes deeper into the inner meaning of the law as revealed in the Old, but it is absurd to say that this is due to an improvement in God. The Old Testament in its frank, unvarnished record gives account of specific sins or persistent low standards in some men who worshipped God, and sometimes fails to record God's disapproval; but the absence of such a record would not mean anything unless a man had a theory to take care of. The fact that men escaped challenge in Old Testament times with sins for which they were rejected in New Testament times means nothing but that they had more light in the latter period.

The changing character of divine judgments in succeeding dispensations is thought by many to support the evolutionary view, and has presented difficulties for honest souls who have taken no interest in the evo-

*Acts 17:30.

lutionist's contention. Outstanding among these difficulties are the use of God's people to execute judgments upon perverse nations; the elimination of entire families, including children, by judicial or military execution; the imprecations or curses upon the enemy as we find them pronounced in the Psalms. All this, we are reminded, has much in common with the customs of the nations generally in those days.

We shall not try to handle this to the satisfaction of those who do not believe in divine judgments. Our point will be that the King and Judge of this universe, as revealed then and now, has undergone no change except in the methods and agencies employed. His view of death is different from ours. With him, the passing of a child or an innocent victim of other people's sins may take place appropriately, accompanied by violence or suffering, which in itself may carry a reflex ministration that we cannot fathom; but for which no doubt he has provided compensations that we fail also to understand. The souls of the children who were torn by bears after they had laughed in derision at the reported ascension of Elijah,* and sportingly challenged Elisha to "Go up, thou bald head," were in better keeping than if they

*2 Kings 2:24.

had remained under the nurture of parents who had instilled such sentiments in them.

We grant that it is hard in our day for one to see how God's chosen people could have been used as his chastening scourge, as he now uses storm, earthquake, or pestilence, without involving hurt to themselves. Perhaps it was possible then, but a decided advance in human sensibilities calls for a different economy now. It still remains a fact, however, that God believes in death, and that he takes people from the earth sometimes by special dispensations, of an exceeding sad character, for administrative reasons. But there is one identity in his law for all dispensations, namely, he teaches us to hold sacred the person of our fellow man; and, outside of the execution of a direct judgment, conferring Jehovah's own prerogative of life and death, his law at all times has forbidden the taking of human life.

THE PSALMS OF JUDGMENT ARE IMPERSONAL.

A few suggestions and illustrations for interpreting the Psalms which pronounce a curse upon the enemy may help some honest soul to see that no theory of a change in God is necessary, but that we can identify in these excellent expressions of the ancient worshipper the same Jehovah whose ethics shine through the sermon on the mount and the twelfth chapter of Romans. A compari-

son of Hebrews 3:7 with the 95th Psalm, beginning at the seventh verse, will show that in the estimation of the New Testament the Psalms represent the utterances of the Holy Spirit, rather than the individual sentiment or animosity of the persons who penned them. If we read Psalm 129, a judgment Psalm, and note carefully verse one in connection with the Psalm, we will observe that the language is put in the mouth of Israel, and that the judgment is pronounced upon the nation's foes instead of some one against whom the Psalmist has a personal grudge. It may always be safely assumed that the judgments are prophetic, and imply no indorsement of personal revenge. If the new theologian thinks that the God of the thirteenth of 1st Corinthians had not evolved in the Old Testament, and that emulators of Jehovah could not think in terms of non-resistance, he ought to review those instances, so full of pathos, where David had Saul repeatedly in his own hand and spared his life. It will be remembered that David wrote some of these imprecatory Psalms, yet it may be safely said that in all his wonderful life he never resented personal insults or permitted a man to be harmed for wronging him when it was purely a personal matter. But when it came to the defense of Israel, or the execution of what he understood to be a

righteous judgment of God, no man could stand before him, and no personal feeling could prevent the firmness of his hand. At times the Holy Spirit represents Christ as speaking in the Psalms, and the enemies mentioned, instead of being enemies of the inspired writer, or even of Israel, are enemies of Christ. An illustration of this will be found in the 86th Psalm, the ninth verse of which directs special attention to our point.

PAGANISM'S DERELICT CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Outside of revealed religion, the "progressiveness" of the idea of God is a pure invention. Just as plants and animals of higher grade deteriorate when left to themselves, just as man also when left without help from the outside goes down hill instead of up in civilization and the scale of being, just as animate nature commonly illustrates the absence of any law of advancement within itself, tending more to regressive than to progressive evolution, so the religions of the world as observed in historic times usually fail to show any improvement in their idea of deity, excepting as they catch reflections from Christianity. Indeed there is good reason to infer that many of the great human religions have had nobler ideas of God, but have lost them through this universal downward tendency. Zoroastrianism, the

religion of Cyrus the Persian, shows its evolution in Parseeism today. Tangora , the Polynesian deity, is an illustration of the same tendency to decline in human ideals of deity. Proof is very scarce for the contention that the idea of deity even among the crudest barbarians is wholly the product of evolution. Among the various heathen religions of the world evidences are frequently found that they have witnessed better days, with a higher instead of a lower conception of deity, and some possess traces that make it entirely reasonable to assume that in the remote past their ancestry had in some degree a knowledge of the true God.

NEW THEOLOGY NOT THEISTIC.

The new theology in its doctrine of God is unwilling to be identified with deism, which separates God from his universe; a philosophy which so frankly challenged, instead of trying to swallow, Christianity two hundred years ago. It boasts a more modern parentage on the scientific side. It insists that it is not against Christianity as were the deists, but that it is Christianity in the most highly evolved form, the only form that can stand the full exposure of the rays of scientific light. It denies the charge of plagiarism, and does not think it in any sense constitutes a case of history repeating itself, though many of us who have escaped the in-

fatuation of the new theology think that history is replete with instances of conclusions and modes of apprehension which answer to what the new theology is now giving us.

While the new theology identifies itself as theistic, we make the point that a system which denies all supernaturalism is not theistic.* Suppose God did ordain the forces. The conservation of energy forms a closed circuit; it is held by all who do not spoil the system with ill fitting, antiquated doctrine, that the original deposit of the Creator held all the laws and potentialities necessary to the unfolding of the present order, and much beyond this. It therefore follows that God answers prayer by immutable laws reposed in nature millions of years before the prayers are uttered; that the special providences in which the Bible abounds, and in which evangelical Christians delight as a warm token of God's nearness, were timed by law in the beginning of the ages; that miracles are the operation of natural laws for which there is no visible explanation, and never an interception of Him who presides over his universe; that indeed he does not preside; that his immanence con-

*"Without a supernatural providence we sink into the bleakness of deism, and might as well sink into materialism or pantheism. Theism is supernaturalism. If there is a personal God there is a supernatural providence." "Systematic Theology," by John Miley, D.D., LL.D., Vol. I, p. 336.

sists in the fact that he is inseparably identified with nature, operating with unalterable regularity through its channels, as he ordained them in the beginning of the ages.

And so we find in much of our modern religious literature the innate religious nature of man, bursting forth in primitive form, treating the phenomena of nature as manifestations of God and referring to them in terms of worship which belong to a personal God.* They do not worship these forces of nature as if some immanent deity were slightly hidden in their bosom awaiting the homage of man, but it is easy to believe they are traveling the same road of decline from true theistic faith that was traveled by the ancestors of the sun and moon and nature worshippers of the great prehistoric civilizations. It will not be understood that we are apathetic in our attitude to nature. The proper appreciation of nature brings man

*"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-men dwell,
Then a sense of law of beauty,
And a face turned from the clod—
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

"A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite, tender sky,
The ripe, rich tints of the cornfields,
And the wild geese sailing high,
And all over upland and lowland
The charm of the goldenrod—
Some of us call it Autumn,
And others call it God."

From poem, "Each In His Own Tongue"; by Wm. Herbert Carruth.

closer to his Creator. Our criticism is directed at the class of homilies now popular in some circles which would make a pious play into the adoration of nature to escape all assumptions of the supernatural; which would offer nature's phenomena as a substitute for the consolations of the Christian assurance that God in his providence presides personally over his universe every moment.

THE DOCTRINE OF "DIVINE IMMANENCE."

A generation ago a certain class of writers gave form to what they deemed a better apprehension of God. Their conception was expressed in the words, "Divine immanence" or "the immanence of God." The literature of Tennyson and other beautiful writers, consciously or unconsciously, inculcated the view;* and no doubt it has served as a spiritual tonic in the meditations of many aesthetic souls. It has put a new beauty and majesty in all of nature, and induced a spirit of reverence in all who caught the idea.

This doctrine of divine immanence has been appropriated by the new theology. It fits admirably into the system; and, while it does not assert itself pro or con upon the

*Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?
* * * * * *
Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.
—The Higher Pantheism, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

subject of miracle and supernatural providence, it prepares the way for the new theologian's adverse position, in which he is free to do away with the supernatural by overdoing it or resolving everything into the supernatural. It is like the argument that if a man gives all, he does not need to give the tenth; if he keeps every day holy, he does not need to keep the Sabbath. So great is the subtlety that some of the most orthodox believers have taken to it ardently. The late Methodist philosopher, Dr. Borden P. Bowne, in his book, "The Immanence of God," quotes an illustration from that ultra champion of orthodoxy, the Sunday School Times, to show the homology of miracle under natural law. A young man looks into a clear pool which portrays an acorn as it falls on the landscape and, while he gazes at the reflection, the acorn bursts, sprouts, springs into a sapling, and then a massive oak. The observer exclaims that this is a miracle; but his instructor awakens him to the fact that he has lost his sense of time. That eighty years have flown since he began to gaze in the pool, and that his hair and beard are long and gray and his garments are threadbare and rotten. Then the observer recalls his words, and says, It is no miracle, it is only nature. The conclusion they draw is that miracle is nature in the role of the unusual, but that na-

ture in the usual with its sunrise, sunset, and bud and blossom, is just as truly miraculous, as truly the work of God. It is divine activity all the same, whether mediated or not.* "The presence of God in nature," says Dr. Bowne, "does not mean that God is here and there in the world performing miracles, but that the whole cosmic movement depends constantly upon the divine will and is an expression of the divine purpose."† Mediaeval Calvinism had a way of making every miracle and supernatural providence, along with the ordinary phenomena of life, part of a stereotyped plan laid out by the Almighty, with drastic precision, before the foundation of the world. With them, God does everything, and moral agency, in men and angels, is an illusion. The more sane champions of this view did not contend that the divine activity in history was unmediated; but a more fanatical subdivision of the fatalistic view, under the doctrine of Occasionalism, taught that God caused the fall of every rain drop and the bursting of every bud, by an act of his will, and that he thus actuated every event, including the ordinary movements of the human body. This was mysticism, denatured by being carried further in the direction of its own excess.

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*"The Immanence of God," by Borden P. Bowne; p. 48.
†Ibid. p. 43.

Indeed every new error of our age is an old error dressed in modern clothes. The subtle fallacy which gives standing to the doctrine of divine immanence today finds good soil for growth in the group psychology of two classes: the theological sons of the old ultra Calvinists who have a left over measure of the momentum of middle age theology, showing itself in their notion of providence and the supernatural; then the rationalists of the scientific world, who, if they must tolerate God, are only content to make his personality at present as meaningless as possible, and if they must grant that he caused anything, let it be understood that he was the first cause, but that with the initiation of the world order his freedom ended, so that now he is restricted merely to the upkeep of the system he caused, without freedom to deviate from any course laid down from the foundation of the world. Indeed such freedom is not needed under this scheme of determinism. All this is very bald unless we feature it with the fond embellishments of the divine immanence, as conceived in Bowne's philosophy and Tennyson's poetry. Yet when one has soared in these heavens of Bowne and Tennyson he must sometimes light to meditate upon the distinctions between divine providence and natural law. Dr. Bowne grapples with this in these

words: "An opportune storm, a drouth or flood, a good or bad harvest, an outbreak of an epidemic would be far more significant to many than the greatest mental and moral progress of society."* "Sometimes the historical crisis is such, and the co-working of complex factors so marked that we seem to be aware of a divinity that shapes our ends. Then we speak of a guiding or overruling Providence. But commonly life runs on in the familiar routine, and we seem left to our own judgment to find the way. At such times we have nothing to say of Providence. But it is clear that the only difference is that sometimes the divine purpose seems manifest, while at other times it is hidden."*

If we admit that there is a third factor in the world, due to a doctrine of moral agency in men and angels, good and evil,—if therefore we admit that God has a set of laws dealing with persons instead of forces, it is our privilege to expect interceptions of the divine Ruler, to meet situations which may arise. We may not always be able to distinguish these interceptions, because of their resemblance to natural events. If there are circumstances connected with the "opportune storm, drought or flood" which afford proof that there has been a special intercep-

*Ibid. p. 45.
*Ibid. p. 53.

tion of the divine hand it is quite proper to attach peculiar significance to it, and out of place to confuse the value of a providential manifestation by making an invidious comparison between it and some great general order like "the mental and moral progress of society." It would be easy thus to chide people with the charge of misplaced emphasis, but it is quite as intelligent as it is human for us to be eager in such events to get a glimpse of God; and no man is a true theist, and no man has his orientation as a student of the Bible, who says that the speech uttered by the flowers and sunshine and recurring seasons constitutes as much of a manifestation of God as does an obvious providence or a direct answer to prayer, in which we see the workings of a sympathetic, personal God. This is proved in the fact that atheism and its slightly less pernicious allies of pantheism, deism and polytheism have never found it necessary to break camp under nature's manifestations of God, whereas, the slogan of the supernatural, with its credentialed prophets, its divided Jordans, its answered prayers, its risen Lord and its revealed Bible, has caused whole nations to recognize God.

If our chapter may descend to a criticism we should say that Dr. Bowne hands everything over to rationalism when he says: "It

is clear that the only difference is that sometimes the divine purpose seems manifest, while at other times it is hidden." Putting divine providence everywhere is equivalent to putting it nowhere, in our system of teaching. Just as extreme socialism, which makes government everything, becomes identical with anarchism, which makes government nothing; just as two men traveling in opposite directions to get as far apart as possible will finally arrive in the same neighborhood, the divine immanence people and the deists, when the former have worked their logic to a finish, give us a teaching identical in its effect, however much the one may sing their pious anthems and denounce the wickedness of the other.

No finite man can comprehend how manifold and how vast are the forces in this world aside from the chemical and mechanical, which, except as God restrains, checks or overrules, may shorten human lives, destroy souls, or spoil nations. These forces are explained by the multitude of spiritual and human intelligence which surround our globe. Personality and free agency have never been understood, but it is too late in the day to ignore them. In denying or ignoring them, the theologian takes himself back to the middle ages, and the scientist buries his head in the sand. The true and living

God is he that upholds all things by the word of his power; who presides over all the forces, known and unknown to us, and who must reign till all enemies are under his feet.*

Our position is, that if we exempt the new theology from being classified under deism, it must be identified as a modern form of pantheism. Pantheism holds that the universe is God, that it evolved or emanated from him, and that in all its phases it is simply a manifestation of him, a part of him. Essentially, that is the position of the new theology. However, in its practical workings, the absence of an intensely religious spirit and of all tendencies to fetish devotion would seem to save the new theologians from classification under pantheism; but since the universe of creatures which are capable of some conception of divine being is included under the five heads of theism, pantheism, deism, polytheism and atheism, we shall have to ask these brethren to choose their position under pantheism or deism.

*1 Corinthians 15:25.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHRIST OF THE NEW THEOLOGY.

There are just two great generic truths in the universe of thought; Creation and Salvation. Almost every other topic with which man has to reckon may be classified as to its subject matter under one of these heads. The position upon either of these questions will have almost everything to do with our body of doctrine as a whole, provided we are coherent. None can deny the ills of life and the evils of the world; but he who contrives a scheme of creation without God will most certainly devise a plan of redemption without God, usually having theorized the world's ills into as mild a form as rhetoric and analogy can effect, extenuating sin and abolishing Satan. Again, he who reduces to a minimum the divine element in creation will reduce to a minimum the divine element in redemption.

The scientific mind wishes to conceive the universe in as simple a form as possible. It shrinks from ascribing complexity to any of its data; but whatever the complexities of a problem, the tendency is to revolt against the supernatural. All things must be re-

garded as belonging to a closed system, whose laws articulate with nature's other laws, admitting no exotic forces. If it finds something that fits none of its classifications and answers to none of its known laws, it reacts to that something as to the nearest resembling familiar object; as did the countryman who drank out of the finger bowl. This is not a fact peculiar to the scientific mind; it shows rather that in a more refined and lofty fashion a law that inheres in the psychology of the illiterate persists in the mind of the world's scholars. Obedient to this bent of nature, leaders of thought in every century have been trying to interpret the person of Christ and fix a self-consistent estimate of him without the aid of faith, notwithstanding the statement of his greatest disciple that he cannot be properly estimated except in the realm of the supernatural.* Science has no articles of faith. The moment it enters the realm of faith it becomes philosophy. But nearly all scientists are philosophers; and, in our day, nearly all philosophers expect to be listed as scientists. Modern philosophy has articles of faith with reference to subjects beyond the reach of investigation, if the removal be in time or space; but it has no place for either the preternatural or the supernatural.

*"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit." 1 Corinthians 12:3.

HISTORIC ERRORS CONTRASTED.

During apostolic times, the person of Christ was disparaged by scholars outside of Jewish circles, not because of its supernatural challenge, but because they were averse to giving preeminent recognition to a Jew. The over confidence which belongs to a people who have made vast conquest of the elements and laws of nature did not belong to that age. A few Greeks were slightly affected with this, but usually all were disposed to admit the existence of a class of unsolvable data. With the Jews who were unfriendly to Christ he was disparaged because of his Galilean origin and other particulars aside from a sober estimate. The early Christian Jews did not get their conception of Christ from a sound interpretation of Isaiah and the other prophets, but from the sectarian interpretation of their time, which recognized his Messiahship to the Jews and failed to see him as the world's Redeemer, the Mediator between God and man. The facts were placed before them by the Master in the early part of his ministry, and they were permitted gradually to develop into the true apprehension of him. Peter's "confession"† was the result of extended observation, sober reflection and divine revelation. Instead of being forced out of a pre-

†"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matthew 16:16.

disposed belief by an abrupt disclosure, John was brought steadily, by all the laws which enter into a normal conviction, up to where he could declare: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."*

With the new theology, all things emanated from God in the original posit, endowed with manifold natural laws which stand in God's stead; and all things proceed back in the direction of God, as represented in the highest manifestation of evolution's law, the "fittest" surviving, the inferior being doomed. This doom involves the elimination of inferior individuals of the highest species and the ultimate dissolution of the lower species. It supposes immortality only for the fittest; and the more common tendency is to make this immortality racial instead of individual. Under this interpretation, it is consistent also to concede the immortality of all the higher and more fundamental species of living creatures.† This illustrates the fact that the new theology in its conception

*1 John 2:2.

†This is made relative by the philosophers' view of the durability of the solar system. It has been calculated that in a given number of millions of years the sun would burn down to a charred mass and life would disappear from our system. Then, of course, with the physiological correlate would pass the psychic phenomena! Physics cannot figure around the necessity of putting a time limit on the longevity of our universe. But even science admits that there is a way around some things that man cannot figure around because of the magnitude of the calculation and the absence of some of the terms.

of deity seems at once to share the view of pantheism and deism.

With the conservation of energy granted in such a way as to make the universe a closed system, and with the Darwinian doctrine of origins assumed, it is impossible to grant that Christ came down from heaven.‡ There is only one place to accord him; he is an outstanding result of progressive evolution; a kind of promontory in a distant continent, which humanity's ship is approaching; the first fruit of a golden period yet to come, creating by his personality and example an idea of a millennial age, the idea itself being "the kingdom of God", gradually fastening upon the imagination of mankind, by means of those instrumentalities invoked by the Church. That he was mistaken in himself and his mission, it is logically necessary, from this standpoint, to conclude; also that, with his perfect moral and spiritual conceptions, he was intellectually crude, trammelled by the superstitions of his day, and in no sense informed ahead of the uninformed scholarship of the time of his ministry.* It

‡"No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." John 2:13.

*"Jesus shared the ignorance of men, not only in his boyhood, but throughout his life. . . . . was possessed in the last months or years of his life by a passionate conviction which in its literal form can only be called a pathetic delusion." "Problems of Religion," by Durant Drake, p. 143.

will be seen readily where, in the estimation of the new theology, is placed the incarnation, the preexistence of Christ, which he teaches us to recognize, the virgin birth, his resurrection from the dead, and other related doctrines. Instead of admitting that these facts corroborated the truth of his divinity, the new theology holds that they are inventions, on a par with fables, growing out of the assumption of his divinity.† Every estimate of him, every account of his works, set forth in his biography, must be levelled by a steam roller of *a priori* reasoning till it tallies with the Christ of modern philosophy.

NO MIDDLE GROUND.

While skepticism or avowed infidelity is more logical than the new theology in that it refuses the impossible task of disparaging Christ and at the same time trying to cling to him, the new theology is more logical when it recognizes that he cannot be evaded or ignored. The simple fact, announced by him and verified a thousand times since, is that every one who is sufficiently enlightened to reckon with him at all must be wholly for him or wholly against him; that is, he must yield his allegiance as to an undi-

†"It is always to be remembered, however, that it is the character and life of Jesus, which led us to believe in the virgin birth, and not the virgin birth which led us to believe in Jesus." "New Testament History," by Harris Franklin Rall, p. 35.

minished, undisparaged Christ, the eternal Son, as he represented himself, or be identified with those who, admitting that he was a genius, regard him as an imposter.* In so regarding him they make him the perpetrator of the world's greatest fraud, the perpetuation of whose name and influence reflects the idiocy of mankind. Unitarianism and all forms of humanizing Christology are committed to an impossibility. Attempt has been made, under the strongest patronage, to found great ecclesiastical systems around the conception of a disparaged Christ, but it has been a uniform failure. Such a Christ is less than no Christ, and there is no cohesion in the nucleus formed around him. The Unitarian Church is today one of the most respectable and cultured bodies in the world, with antecedents of scholarship dating back to the Renaissance and the Enlightenment; yet, they number a membership of less than a hundred thousand. They symbolize the shelter and church life of those who are too consistent to ignore Christ, and not consistent enough to accept his own representation of himself. Due to the fact that modern thought has prepared a favorable ground, they have been a leavening influence in many of the great orthodox denominations during recent decades. Some of the seminaries of

*"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." Matthew 12:30.

evangelical Churches would easily pass for Unitarian schools today. But what is the result? A shortage of candidates for the ministry, and a decline in the average number of additions to the Church, with sages shaking their heads in perplexity, and ecclesiastical philosophers trying to show where the trouble lies. The alternatives of this age are Christ and anti-christ; and the moment we disparage the personality of Christ we cease to gather with him and begin to scatter abroad.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

In some of our seminaries today, teachers are accorded shelter who advance the sophistry that the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is not necessary to Christianity; others say that the doctrine of his resurrection from the dead is not an essential among Christian evidences. To declare unessential a truth that is essential amounts to the annulling of that truth, and paves the way infallibly to a policy of opposition to it if it works a hardship upon the new program; and certainly these truths make such hard sledding for the new theology that we cannot regard it a mere incident when some professor rises in his place to pronounce them "unessential." We are bound to suspect in him a fellowship for the new program, and we have never heard of an in-

stance where developments proved the suspicion unfounded.

It is a favorite fallacy in new theological literature and with a certain class of clever professors who even assume sympathy for the virgin birth and kindred mysteries connected with the beginnings of our Lord's earthly history, to say that the volume of his influence accruing since he left the earth is necessary, to prove the virgin birth in the logic of the times. The inference is, that such presentations as the virgin birth are superfluous among Christian evidences now, though valid and useful at the outset, and that we would gain a point in our modern statement if we quietly dropped these things as encumbrances. Dr. Lyman Abbot includes the resurrection of Jesus among the encumbrances of modern faith.* This is as intelligent in sound as it is defective in sense. Those things in the beginning were among the evidences; and we cannot disentangle them without suspending our whole system in mid air. I might as consistently say that the Bible was my proof that the Son of God had power to forgive my sins, but since I had experienced forgiveness, the practical proof had annulled the necessity for the initial proof, and I did not need that part of my Bible any more.

*Article on "A Religious Revolution," "The Outlook," September, 1915.

The difficulties of believing in the virgin birth are not specific. They come and go with man's general aversion for the supernatural. It may be held that this constitutes a phase of the supernatural gratuitously injected into the situation; but this is not for finite man to decide. No one holds that God could not have devised some other way to bring about the incarnation; but those who accept the fulfillment of prophetic utterances as something more than an accident or an invented dovetail are bound to take seriously the report of Matthew and Luke and the early Christians regarding the virgin birth. A *bona fide* prophecy, from one of the least questioned of all prophetic sources* reads: "Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Evasive writers might say this meant no promise of an unusual thing, referring merely to the first child of a young woman; but the prophet protects us against this interpretation by saying that it was to be something unusual, a "sign", which "Jehovah himself" should give. There is no chance of historic mistake in the fact that Jesus Christ was begotten out of wedlock. No one would have thought

*Isaiah 7:14. If there were "two Isaiahs" this was the original one.

to invent this as an advantage in founding a fraudulent religious enterprise. With a minimum credit for the historicity of the story as a whole the sequence shows that Mary and Joseph were people of chaste character, with ideals which were strenuously high. Clean things do not come out of unclean things; and we remember that the greatest enemies of Christ paid tribute to his character. This argument should have its required supplement for the modern Christian critic when he remembers what the purifying stream of Christianty has meant to the world. He would violate all his instincts of logic to say that it sprang forth under false pretenses; or, assuming the doctrine of the virgin birth to be a subsequent invention, he would go back upon his conception of moral coherency in saying that such holy results could come from such unholy assumptions.

INCARNATION FALSE AND TRUE.

It is a fact brought out by the study of comparative religions, that the idea of divine incarnation was not peculiar to the Hebrews, and not new at the time Christ appeared. The schools of skepticism and orthodoxy have used this fact as the basis of conclusions which are diametrically opposite, the former accusing the church of construct-

ing its idea of the person of Christ out of borrowed material. But, on the side of the truth, it has been shown that the church got its idea of Christ from himself*, whose credentials were and have continued to be so imposing that to challenge them is like questioning the validity of the tides or auditing the source of a sunbeam. If the sun looks in through your window and says, I am Sol, the day spreads its mantle over the land to confirm his profession.

Everything is grist for the evolutionist's mill; and the evidence from antiquity of a widespread wish among the nations for a manifestation of God in the flesh has been taken as a symptom of an innate outreach which has explained man's rise from the animal kingdom. They accept this as a part of nature's wisdom; but, while they credit nature with great precision in reaching her objectives on other lines, they fail to recognize the possibility of a valid answer to humanity's cry for an incarnation. The outreach of humanity's heart for "the desire of all nations" is to them like the tendril of a climbing vine, reaching for a shad-

*"I and my Father are one." John 10:30.

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: Again, I leave the world and go to the Father." John 3:28.

"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." John 10:33.

ow or a fictitious rafter; whereas, when things go as nature would have them the direction of the tendril's reach may be taken infallibly as the direction of the pole. The widespread expectancy of the incarnation, working itself out in mythical compositions and concrete impostures is a voice of the ages proclaiming the advent of Immanuel. This is confirmed by scores of analogies. As light is made to answer to the eye, as sound to the ear, as food is made to answer hunger, and the same God made them all, so the cry of man's worshipping nature, startlingly portrayed through the findings of comparative religions, was induced by the same God, who manifested himself among men in the person of Jesus Christ, with adequate facilities to answer that cry in all who would receive him.

THE CLIMAX IN MIRACLES.

It is not necessary to encumber this chapter with a formula defending the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead. It was prophesied that he would rise, that he should not see corruption*, and he foretold his own resurrection.† The report that he did rise could not have grown out of a buoyant ex-

*Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27.

†"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Matthew 16:21.

pectancy in the minds of his disciples, for, having been unable to believe that he would die, they had failed to arm themselves with a faith to offset the shock when he did die. Consequently, they were resigned to an uncertain prospect, and would only believe he had risen when compelled to do so by stubborn evidence.‡ In its more extreme form, the new theology would have us believe that the Lord did not die, but simply passed through a trance, to retire into obscurity, and later die a natural death; or else that his friends did probably steal his body and start a false report, as was stated among the opposing Jews. The evidence of his resurrection has been clearly pointed out in many ably written volumes, and is before us in the very life of this age. Every attempt to explain it away is so palpably weak and so evidently due to a desire to take care of science or something else, that we may gain nothing here by trying to reckon with it. This outstanding event of history, the certainty of which increases in volume with each turn of the wheel of time, serves as an immortal proof-text for the gospel we preach. The fact that Jesus lives, that he lives on the triumphant side of the grave, has explained not only that contagious certainty which has marked the successful ex-

‡Luke 24:11, 21, 22. John 20:25.

ponents of the Gospel in every age, but this thrilling fact, settled beyond all chance of refutation, has put into the disciples of Christ a spirit of daring, a sentiment of self denial, a willingness to invest their all, which has been the amazement of every thinking man who was unacquainted with the underlying secret. As the sun at his rising would dissolve the halo of the street lights, so this has been the miracle that swallowed up all other miracles. So loftily does it stand out upon the horizon of the past that no other miracle is deemed necessary as a credential for the gospel. Miracles may be worked today, bringing consolation or relief to the servants of God, but they are no longer needed, and should be no longer offered as credentials for the Gospel. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead renders the Gospel no longer an unconcluded argument, but a grand proclamation. However the faith of men of other ages might have come, "faith comes by hearing"* in every normal instance of our day. If a man can be justified he can be glorified;† but he cannot be justified without faith.‡ The resurrection of Jesus Christ is offered by the Scriptures as a sufficient basis for justifying faith.**

*Romans 10:17.
†Romans 8:30.
‡Romans 5:1. Hebrews 11:6.
**Romans 4:20-25.

THE FAILURE OF LABORATORY ANALYSIS.

The "traditional" view of the person of Christ is not traceable to mere traditions of the past, nor is the "critical" view the result of scientific findings. The new position gets its support rather from the psychology of the present time. "The Christ of the new theology" is the natural product of a line of emphasis in the education of today, which line is bound to be shifted after the spot light shines on it a few more decades. Those who would bring the person of Jesus Christ to the laboratory for analysis, or who would subject him to an investigation in the matter of his genesis, his advent, his program and his future, may expect to be baffled with more than one unanswerable question. The difficulties are not reduced by turning to evolution or the new theology for a solution. To be consistent, evolution must compliment him with the distinction of being in his day the highest product of progressive evolution; but it must also, to be consistent, expect a greater than Jesus, as the millenniums pass. Even a new theologian would regard such a position as anti-Christian; but honest, outspoken infidels, who, instead of trying to supplant and take the property and title of Christianity, are frankly declaring themselves against Christ, will admit the logic of our position. It is a

case of trying to accept him and reject him at the same time, when one holds him as the Christ for every age and at the same time refuses to see in his advent a new addition to the cosmic system from the divine universe above us; an exotic force, beyond the natural order.

Naturally, there are many problems encountered when we begin to study the person of Christ. His existence from eternity, his relationship with the Father as the "only begotten" Son, his incarnation, his temporary humiliation while in the flesh, with the question of his resignation of rights and limitation of knowledge, his subjection of himself to the necessity of meeting human conditions, including supplication and obedience unto death. These, more seriously than his subsequent "glorification" and his coming majesty, present us themes which are hard to comprehend, and in the acceptance of which we must have recourse to faith. We cannot figure them out or expound them after a rational scheme. We can reconcile our intelligence, however, in two reflections: All these phenomena, while *beyond* reason, are not *contrary* to reason; and all other schools, being bound to accept Christ as a fact, have tried in vain to account for him on a basis which involves any less of difficulty or which brings half as much bene-

fit and blessing to mankind as that which accepts him just as he represented himself. The careful student of the life of Christ is well aware that pre existence from eternity and divine attributes were claimed for him in the days of his ministry and in apostolic times; and the man of reverence and faith will also recognize that the claim was backed by overwhelming credentials during those times and it has been unceasingly confirmed by the results of his influence in the world through the ensuing centuries; an influence which was never so great as today, after nineteen centuries have passed.

PREEXISTENCE, SONSHIP AND LIMITATIONS

How, then, shall we dismiss our difficult questions? There is no syllable of proof that the supreme being is triune in his manifestation, with a person in the Godhead called "the Son," excepting as we find it in holy writ, or get it from the statement of Christ. It is a fact which vaguely appears in the Old Testament, but awaits its clear definition in the New. We may infer that "the Son," being a term borrowed from the analogies of this life, presents one way, of which there are others, for enabling the human mind to form a profitable apprehension of Christ's place in the Godhead. It follows, therefore, that the word "begotten," when applied to the eternal Son, is entirely

free from one of its meanings as we hold it in the analogy of human generation, and is employed, not to imply that there was a time when Christ was not, but to impress us with the vital oneness of Christ with the Father. A small minority of orthodox teachers have narrowed the reference of this term and its equivalents to the work of the Holy Spirit in the natural generation of Jesus, assuming that his existence in the Godhead from the eternities past was to be apprehended under some other analogy; but the sound position, which orthodoxy generally favors, recognizes the fact that from the beginning, when God out of his love contemplated the gift of Christ as the world's Savior (John 3:16) he was the "only begotten Son." The problem of his incarnation we have already studied, to the satisfaction of one who has faith; but if one is predisposed to unbelief, it is a part of the divine economy to give him a way of escape from the necessity of believing, as no conscripts are wanted in the way of faith.

It is evident that Christ represented some of his divine attributes as being suspended during the years that he lived in human flesh and subjected himself to natural laws. He refers to an item of knowledge which was kept from him during his humiliation,*

*Acts 8:33; Mark 13:32.

and we may infer that, though during the period of his Spirit-filled ministry his discerning power was extensive,† other items of knowledge were temporarily put away from him as a part of his emptying.‡ His authority while in the flesh, vast as it was over disease, devils, and forces of nature, may have had limits; but it was made infinite after his resurrection.** Exactly to estimate the status of the great Christ after the measure of a man or after the measure of God, during the several periods between the nativity and the ascension, would be impossible. It was never intended that he should be an available specimen in anybody's laboratory of psychology or metaphysics. It is easy for the unsympathizing critic, reading the conversations and sermons of Jesus and the record of his deeds, to say that his knowledge was circumscribed, and that he partook of the superstitions of his day. But, in answer to the former, we may be reminded that though Jesus made free use of nearly all the subjects which now furnish the basis of the several sciences, he never made a scientific blunder. This is the more remarkable when we remember that most any preacher or orator today drawing topics from subjects in which he is unread is liable

†John 2.24-25; Luke 5:22.
‡Philippians 2:6-8.
**Matthew 28:18.

to make conspicuous mistakes, and when we bear in mind the fact that other literature coming to us from that time commonly exhibits a crudeness of understanding when it undertakes to handle scientific data and a very quaint flavor in most of its philosophy.

DEVILS AND DISEASE.

About all the charge of superstition hinges around his recognition of the existence of devils, and his seeming accord with the prevailing belief, still common in certain pagan nations, that there is intimate relationship between ordinary physical afflictions and the possession of evil spirits. The most that can be got out of this is that Christ admitted that such a relationship sometimes existed. It is quite certain that he ascribed some afflictions to the sins of the individual, without reference to demoniacle possession.* It is also clear that he admitted the possibility of grave physical affliction without any sin whatever being connected with the cause.† To what extent he deliberately adapted himself to the erroneous views of those who waited upon his ministry we have no way of telling; but a resort to this is a doubtful method for explaining difficult questions. His recognition of the existence of devils, especially of the existence of Satan, needs

*John 5:14.
†John 9:3.

no apology, excepting in the arena of the new theology, where apology is needed also for his miracles, and for all that pertains to the supernatural, including the experiences of grace in the Christian heart. That the word devil, as employed in the New Testament, might sometimes stand for an evil disposition or a sinful principle is quite generally conceded. Casting out devils is the New Testament expression for what we mean by getting people converted; but the question of belief in devils resolves itself to the question of whether we shall believe in the supernatural or the spiritual realm at all. When the latter is settled there is no difficulty about the former. The repeated efforts of such scholars as those composing the Society for Psychical Research to grapple with the phenomena of the occult, the divided courts which have often resulted from these investigations, the unsolved metaphysical problems which continue confessedly to hang over the horizon of science, including the sublime phenomena described in Begbie's *Twice Born Men*, all serve to make us infallibly sure that science is not infallibly sure there is no devil. Any discussion, therefore, which would reflect upon the intelligence and integrity of Jesus Christ, whose phenomenal assets are so great, with so few liabilities to offset them, should be shifted from those

points where modest scientists can claim no certain knowledge, and confined to questions of established fact.

THE LAST WORD IN EVIDENCE.

This done, and we believe that the unfriendly critic will soon become as silent as the lawyer of old, who durst ask him no more questions. The communities where the Lord Jesus Christ has been fairly and fully represented present a marked advancement over all other communities. The better influences now dominant in the world are traceable to him; whether it be in the institutions of mercy for the afflicted, the opening of the door of equity to the poor, the humble and the toiler, the elevation of woman from vassalage to the queenly position for which she was made, or the movements for man's higher developement mentally and spiritually. But when a proponent eludes these proofs and satisfies himself that the world without Jesus could have had all these things, we have remaining, as facts of history past and current, thousands of men and women redeemed from shackles of habit and depths of degradation from which no cult of earth has ever been able to bring them, and no device of science at its best has ever been sufficient to recover them. The Mary Magdalenes and the erry McAuleys are not the least among the glorious credentials of the

Christ of orthodoxy. The question arises, could the Christ of the new theology have cast the devils out of them?

This Christ who has such a significant past, to whom the present bears such voluminous testimony, claimed for himself a future more glorious than all; and, after all that has come in the way of proof, who is so hardy as to doubt that there is something in his claim? The inducements for one to identify himself with this same Christ through an unquestioning faith, accepting his program and not trying to make a new one, supporting his standards without trying to trim them, were never more attractive than today. Not only does his way present to us the brightest path that wisdom has ever found, but it is the only safe way for nations or for men to reach the desired haven.

CHAPTER V.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.

It is generally believed that when a man goes beyond what he can learn through his sense faculties, his knowledge is only approximate; and that it must undergo revision and seek improvement till he goes hence into the light of a clearer day. This is true, as it touches fields of speculative thought; but on questions vital to human salvation and hope a more sure word is needed. As the need is so natural and so uniform, it is in harmony with all the analogies of nature for us to expect a supply, to answer the need. Orthodox Christianity affirms that such a supply is found in the Bible. To the Bible we ascribe an infallibility for human guidance which is only qualified by imperfections of *copying*, *translation*, and of *interpretation*. It is admitted that these three sources of error have produced quite an obscuring effect, varying in its density in different generations, and in different circles in the same generation. It is held, nevertheless, that these obscuring factors do not place the sincere student at a hopeless disadvantage; the facilities for determining all

the books that are canonical have furnished conclusions which are almost as exact as a process in mathematics, and the resources for checking up the work of copyists and translators are so manifold as to make the list of disputed renderings surprisingly small. Most of the confusion of tongues, ecclesiastically speaking, has grown out of conflicting or diverging interpretations. To the opposer of divine revelation this is a proof that the Bible contradicts itself; an assertion which two generations ago was left to Thomas Payne and Robert Ingersoll; but which is now made by "devout" scholars in our seminaries and in theological literature with a seriousness which would imply that a caveat is entirely out of the question.

It would require a master of metaphysics to explain the manifold divergencies in interpreting the Bible. He would have to show how sentiment, the fruit of environment or heredity, would color the premises of a syllogism; how prejudice or selfish ends could influence the processes of thought; how habit in reacting could make individuals and groups mistake a psychological process for a logical method; how beliefs could become epidemic, whose subjects admire their skies and pay little attention to their grounds; how personal equation would make a dozen astronomers write as many different reports

of an eclipse of the sun, or produce a perceptible difference in the rendering of the same piece of instrumental music by artists at Berlin, London, Rome, Boston, Nashville, and Tokyo. It is certain that without any strain he could account for the conflicting interpretations of the Bible and not have to charge that sacred book with inconsistency or self contradiction. And as for the minor disagreements in the text, men who have made so much of the debauching results of the copying and interlining of old manuscripts cannot turn and charge minor disparities to the Biblical writers without exhibiting prejudice or betraying lack of sincerity. Indeed the small verbal contrarieties in the Holy Scriptures have been met and explained in our standard commentaries by methods of exegesis entirely satisfactory to sympathetic readers.

THE FIRST DESTRUCTIVE STROKE.

Modern destructive criticism frees itself for action, first by denying the peculiar authority of the Bible. This is accomplished by puncturing every theory of inspiration that has historic standing. The believer is relieved of the breath-taking result of an abrupt fall by the assurance that Jesus Christ had authority, that historic methods can sufficiently determine the gist of his teaching to make us safe in having something to

guide us, and that this gist, supplemented by the results of his life, projected down through the centuries, serves as a touchstone by which to interpret the allegories of Old Testament history, and to correct the crude standards which are imbedded in the sixty-six books; especially in the thirty-nine.

The spirit that negotiates this high handed denial of inspiration does not believe in the supernatural. In former centuries its school could not get together on a slogan for substituting the Biblical account of the origin of the earth and its inhabitants and of civilization, morality, and religious institutions. Now, these are all solved in the one word *evolution;* and a key is at hand with which to account for each book of the Bible and to interpret its contents.

It follows, therefore, *a priori*, that the first five books in the Bible were written at a date much later than Moses. They teach that God created all things, that man in his lowly condition, where history first finds him, represents a *descent* from diviner conditions instead of an *ascent* from animal forbears. They teach that the religion that has typed the world's chief civilization originated by revelation in an epochal compass of time and that the fundamental ethics of life, while true to nature's criteria, did not originate from nature, but were given in one day

from the hand of God, and that the revelation which God made of himself at that time included the tuitionary system of Levitical laws with a magnificent ritual, unfolding almost in a day, in the camps of a "primitive, barbarous, illiterate" people. Such teaching must be false if spontaneous generation be true. The institutions and civilization implied in the Pentateuch had to come about gradually, allowing centuries of time for their developement after the exodus.

Consequently, we are asked to look for proof that the five books of Moses were written hundreds of years after Moses, in the ripe years of the history of the Hebrew nation, by clever literary men who collected old documents containing the myths and folklore of the centuries and wove them into a history interspersed with legend, to give their highly developed laws and ritual an ancient setting, and, in keeping with the customs of the nations, assign to themselves a past full of fictitious glory. This is the key, the Rosetta stone, of the modern critical method, in the schools which deny the doctrine of divine revelation; and much of its method has been taken over by schools that still claim to believe in an orthodox inspiration of the Scriptures. But it is self-evident either that such schools do not believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures or that

they have not yet thought their problem through and found the ground on which they really belong.

PRO AND CON OF MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP.

All our readers will not count us fair in saying that the first assumption against the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was *a priori*; that students were "asked to look for proof" against the orthodox position. It was not *a priori* to those who learned it as parrots. Students of the seminaries today, where denial of Mosaic authorship is inculcated, are usually brought into this hypothesis from inductive sources. After being shown a presumptive ground against the Mosaic authorship in the thought that Moses was a man of action, a practical man of affairs, and that writing was out of his line, they are offered as concrete proof against Mosaic authorship, the argument that Biblical history from Joshua to the exile "ignores Levitical law"; that geographical designations in the Pentateuch, such as, "On the other side of Jordan," etc., indicate the author as located in Palestine, where Moses never entered; that certain weights and measures and other objects of Moses' time are defined by the writer of the Pentateuch as if he were writing later; that historic source books and other features belonging to Moses' time are quoted in the Pentateuch as

belonging to a date earlier than the time in which the author was writing; and, finally, that the original Hebrew gives the books of the Pentateuch a stratified or composite appearance, as if they had evolved or had been compiled from miscellaneous sources, the streaks being manifest in the translations; as, e. g., the two accounts of creation in the opening of Genesis.

These arguments point out difficulties so elementary that the average reader may surmount them in a few moments of reflexion, after comparing contexts. A brief discussion from a safe source is found in "Old Testament Introduction" by Dr. John H. Raven, pages 93-114. It is easy to assemble chapters of proof in favor of the Mosaic authorship that is highly assuring to those who are not pre-induced by an opposing atmosphere or obsessed with a theory which makes Mosaic authorship impossible in the premises. The following is a line of proof in gist which is susceptible of most satisfying development : (1) A large part of the Pentateuch professes to have been written by Moses. (2) References to it, by Old and New Testament writers uniformly ascribe it to Moses. (3) Jesus Christ always treated it as the work of Moses. (4) The Jews of Christ's time believed that Moses wrote the five books. (5) Many texts in the

Hebrew, referring to Egypt, prove the author's familiarity with that country. (6) The original contains Hebrew words of Egyptian flavor, not usually found in the other Old Testament writings. (7) Customs peculiar to Egypt are referred to as existing when the Pentateuch was written. (8) The laws, said by critics to be of later origin, show marks of having originated under the author's circumstances, e. g., Lev. 25:1, 2. They also show a primitive intermingling of civil, economic, moral and religious codes.

But the men of originality, who founded this new hypothesis, approached it by deductive methods. They were ultra evolutionists, and they felt that the Bible had to be for their theory or not be at all. They began their investigation expecting to find that the Pentateuch was a more modern document; and, true to a maxim of psychology, they found what they expected. They found it not, however, till they had borrowed the shrewd arguments that European deism had framed in the past three hundred years for the destruction of the authority of Moses' writings and the annihilation of revealed religion, and had analyzed with pathetic minuteness the smallest philological technicalities of the Hebrew manuscripts. About all that we must concede is that this ancient charter of revealed religion contains diffi-

culties; and this concession was made before evolutionary criticism arose to magnify the difficulties.

"CONTRIBUTIONS" OF DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM.

It is diverting to read of what this "scientific" method of investigation has done for Biblical interpretation. Let us inquire what new facts have been brought to light by evolutionary criticism. What do they know that the scholars before them did not know in the form of data for estimating the books of the Bible? Some other manuscripts have been found, but these make no special contribution to Biblical criticism, excepting to add weight to orthodoxy and increase the critic's problem. Some excavations have been made, but destructive critics are usually shy of the spade, for it has flatly disputed their word and driven them from their former assertion that people could not read in the days of Moses;† and as the archaeologists continue to dig there is immanent danger to evolutionary critics, for they have found the ancient city of Troy which the "critical method" pronounced a myth,* and they are likely at any time to dig up a section of the Pentateuch among the antiquities of Moses' time. What have they new to offer us on the subject of Mosaic authorship?

†The Deciding Voice of the Monuments on Biblical Criticism," by M. G. Kyle, LL.D., p. 83 f.
*Ibid. p. 38.

Nothing but a fond doctrine of evolution and a clever formation of rhetoric which, denying the Mosaic authorship, makes a forgery out of the first five books of the Bible, and then shows us how to exercise respect for that forgery and derive help from its moral teachings.

The doctrine of inspiration denied, the theory of allegory, fable, fiction and superstition easily provides explanation for all that we have from the pens of the Old and New Testament writers which might embarrass the assumptions of science; and time is so magnanimous in its burial of circumstantial evidence that it has been found possible to manipulate authorship and dates of the several books so as to protect the plausibility of allegory and fiction theories. Protection for the plausibility of a thing is all that a man wants to warrant its use as a keystone in his arch, provided it is the only thing that will fit in well enough to keep his arch from falling. The subtleties of argument are always sufficient to give scientific airs to any theory which does not fall upon the mishap of a categorical refutation.

Happily for the interests of the Church of God—and, since a divine decree has guaranteed the Church's interests so that it needs no human defenders,—happily for the interests of unsophisticated humanity, the ef-

forts of destructive criticism to treat the first five books of the New Testament by a method parallel with their method of treating the Pentateuch have failed. If the position could have stood unexploded, that the synoptic Gospels were written by ingenuous preachers of the second century, over the names of Matthew, Mark and Luke, it would have been just as consistent as saying that the Pentateuch was written by a clever penman several centuries later than Moses, and it would not then have been so difficult to say that the Christ of the Gospels was manufactured by his disciples, who, at a period so late that no one would be in a position to deny their assertions, took a life a little above the ordinary, which ended with a tragic death, and exalted it into a life of deity, covering it with a fictitious halo and filling it with legendary miracles. *It is now conclusively proved* that these Gospels originated before the death of the Apostle Paul, at a time when much literature could have been launched in answer to the extraordinary claims which they set forth for Christ, had not the world been so aghast at the time with the astounding facts of his life that no one in that generation felt warranted to make reply.* It turns out that the centuries of the Christian era have not been long

*Cf. "Freedom of Thought in Religious Teaching," by R. J. Cooke, D.D., LL.D., p. 68 ff.

enough to bury the circumstantial evidence proving the apostolic origin of the Gospels. Even the rationalists of the present time who make any pretence to broad investigation concede this; and, though they are not disposed to let this inning of orthodoxy agitate much attention, we are quite sure that when history records the rise and fall of destructive criticism it will mention this as their Waterloo.

CREATING AND OPPOSING CARICATURES.

It is destructive to the new theology and contrary to its spirit to admit any theory of inspiration which would give unqualified authority even to a correctly rendered, rightly interpreted Bible. It is committed to a program of opposition at this point. The method of administering this iconoclasm is *ad populum*. They first pit the authority of the Scriptures against the authority of Jesus Christ, and please the orthodox reader by deferring to Christ, choosing a person instead of a document. Seemingly, his utterances are treated as a higher form of inspiration to be preferred before the other writings of the Bible; but it soon turns out that his authority is taken to the exclusion of the authority of the Scriptures, of which he says, "They are they which testify of me"; and eventually, when Christ has been used to substitute the Scriptures, we are asked

to deny his deity and treat his authority as that of a man. The treatment of the subject of inspiration is illustrative of the treatment of the subjects of atonement, depravity, future punishment and other phases of orthodox teaching. The crudest mediaeval modes of apprehension are described and then demolished, the work of destruction not ceasing till the pupil is brought securely over to the side of rationalism. The straw men which have been destroyed in new theology pulpits and class rooms during recent decades would make a considerable decoy regiment. In preparing a nauseating gorge on the subject of inspiration we are reminded of the Greek oracles, of heathen trances, and of the rhapsodies of pagan priests, during which times they are supposed to make exalted utterances, and we are asked to view this as illustrative of the evangelical conception of inspiration. We are told that there is no middle ground between this and the poetic muses of Tennyson, which, while they may have secured him against prosaic and mediocre expressions, were no guarantee against inaccuracy.

The essential doctrine of inspiration as retained by Christianity holds the following maxims.

EVIDENCE THAT GOD HAS SPOKEN.

1. Things cannot be made without a mak-

er. A cause must be equal to an effect, and it is easily presumed to be greater. It is unthinkable that he who formed the eye cannot see, or he that planted the ear cannot hear. It is inevitable that average humanity in its best stage of reflection should feel sure of the existence of a Supreme Being in no sense averse or indifferent to the interests of those creatures which represent the highest product of his creative power, and entirely able to occupy their viewpoint.

2. Without attempting to account for the obvious chasm between the Creator and his intelligent creation, by which direct and common communication is excluded, only one inference is possible in the average judgment, and that is, that our Maker is disposed to communicate with us. (a) Instinctively we want to hear from him and express ourselves to him. (b) It is plainly seen by analogy and contrast that we are in trouble; something is the matter. (c) We have a will, and we know he must have a will; and we are almost unanimously assured that if some way is devised by which his will can be communicated to us it will be better for us.

3. It is inevitable, therefore, that man in his mood of better intelligence should expect to find on the earth a communication in some form from his Maker. True to this assumption, investigation proves that virtually all

peoples, throughout human history, have been expecting a communication from God; and in their eagerness they have fostered manifold superstitions as fancied fulfillments of their felt need. Like travelers in a desert, crazed with thirst, they have chased the mirage and drank the libations of their own feverish imaginations.

4. It turned out, as the centuries advanced, that certain men of exalted character, the moral and spiritual elite of the world, claimed to have received communications from God. Certain ear marks different from all figmental revelations should have lent plausibility to their claims. (a) The one speaking out from the shadows demanded holiness, separation from sin.* (b) Though choosing a family or tribe through which to make effective his communication to mankind, he represented himself not as a tribal God, but as recognizing the unity of the world of created intelligences, and as having ultimately an equal interest in all.†

5. The influence of these men and of their professed divine revelation has never perished, has had essential causal relation to the best philanthropy and the best ethics of the modern civilized world; and these chosen representatives of humanity have, as a result of their alleged mediation between the

*Genesis 15:6; 17:1.
†Genesis 18:18.

Creator and the creature, become citizens of the world, inhabitants of the centuries, co-adjutors with the world movers of every generation since their time. There is scarcely one of them who could be called an exception, whether they figure in the revelation of the old or the new dispensation.

6. From the hands of this outstanding group of humanity's peers have come manuscripts out of which have been sifted, with painstaking care, by the profoundest scholarship, a collection of books, sixty-six, as they are now divided, whose authors implied by tone or express statement that they were writing in the capacity of seers, "moved by the Holy Spirit,"* whom deity had selected as representatives of the ages to record a collection of facts, illustrations, counsels and laws in such a shape as to embody in available form the essential truth pertaining to man's origin and destiny and a disclosure of the will of his Maker.

7. The writings of these professed receiving agents of humanity originated within a period of about fifteen centuries of the worlds' history; and, notwithstanding the variations of temperament, education, or chronological vantage ground, they show a uniformity in their ideals and breadth of sympathy and a unity in scheme and objec-

*2 Samuel 23:2; 2 Peter 1:21.

tive which argues for the fact that they were all under the dominion of one central, governing mind. The presence of the local coloring of the age of each writer, with the relentless portrayal of human nature as a setting for these gems of divine thought, are more confirming to our faith in the authenticity of the documents than would be a studied uniformity which undertook to refine away all sensuous data. Like the stars of the heavens observed with a natural eye, the Scriptures present a unity of lustre in their ideals, and a uniformity in their materials, with no apparent systemization; but, like the stars again, under the lens of devout analysis they present a system, so manifold in its conjunctions and so extensive in its reach that scholars not blinded by the conceit of unbelief have felt that this life was too short to complete even an elementary chart of the heavens of divine truth.

8. Wherever the salt waters of the sea transgress the earth, the fruits and flowers fail and the desert wastes abound. If we had no other way to determine the quality and chemical content of these waters this would be sufficient. The Koran, the writings of Confucius, the oracles of Buddha, indeed every formula for solving man's problems and enriching his hopes, when given sufficient time for the dead weight of its inertia to

consolidate, has constricted the germ of civilization and given us a community that had to have outside help to prevent its going from bad to worse. But the Bible, fairly placed in any community or nation, or assimilated in the life of any individual, has taken away sterility, released the best germ forces, and brought bud, blossom and fruitage as when irrigations from a mountain lake are turned upon the alluvial valley.

9. When a man has in his mine a substance that will fuse metals or absorb gas or exert some other singular influence, and, in trying to convince me of the merits of his mine, he gives me some of its product and challenges me to try it, I am not fair if I lay it away on a shelf to be covered with dust and use my influence as a gainsayer to heckle him in the sale of his stocks to develop his mine. The Bible contains many striking prophecies which have been fulfilled and are being fulfilled before our eyes. Scholars can only fail to see this by having their minds prejudiced through abstractions about the Bible. It contains scores of promises which the sincere heart may put to a test any day, and which have been tested and brought blessing to thousands of people whose intelligence and ability to estimate proof would not be questioned on any material subject.

10. There is no questioning the malignity,

and, sometimes, the sincerity, of the age-long attack which has been made upon the Bible. There is scarcely any thinkable resource which has not been drawn upon as a means of opposition. We grant that opposition is a good advertiser, and sometimes a generator of sympathy for the victim; especially where it is actuated by animosities or emotions of fancied virtue. But there is a form of opposition which is laid in deep design; which forgets no law of psychology; which takes its time and calls to its service an alliance of all the available weapons, directed by the best generalship that training can produce. This form of opposition has buried philosophers, destroyed armies, sunk navies, annihilated cities, and so completely destroyed nations that the historians cannot unearth data to write a chapter of their history. That same style of opposition, spanning centuries with its persistency, has been directed against the Bible, shaped and reshaped by kings, statesmen, philosophers, ecclesiastics, false prophets, blackguards and outlaws. The weapons have been in all forms; from the bonfire, the shaft of sarcasm and the profane curse, to that of denaturing sophistry, perversion, substitution, destructive lower criticism and destructive higher criticism. Laws of state and laws of church have been invoked. Although laws are

multiplying to safeguard religious liberty, and although we hear no one profanely swearing at the Bible today, it was never in history subjected to an attack which had a better show of success than now. It was never opposed with less apparent spleen, never with more confidence of success, never with more serene complacency, never with a greater illusion of superior scholarship, and never with a more subtle intoxication of the sense of their own noble virtues. But this word of God is a thing of life. Its claims of divine origin are sustained in the way it has stood the test of opposition and remained proof against breakage and proof against alloy. Its elements are so unique that it will not take up a mixture which earthly alchemists may devise to denature its content; and in the matter of stability it is as permanent as the mundane heavens.* The names of most of its opposers of former generations have disappeared from history. Many of them have come to a sad end. Movements revolving around other centers, contrary to the Bible, have cracked and crumbled and been abandoned by the children of their own champions; but the word of God abides. In estimating this unanswerable credential of God's word, a humble author of thirty-five years ago wrote a four verse

*Matthew 5:17, 18; Luke 16:17; 1 Peter 1:23, 25; Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 119:89

poem, from which we quote the first two verses, neglecting the latter, in which he makes his application:

"Last eve I stood before a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring its vesper chime;
Then looking in I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

" 'How many anvils have you had,' said I,
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' he answered; then with twinkling eye—
'The anvil wears the hammer out, you know.' "†

THEORY AND FACT.

There are short-sighted people who suppose that the *fact* of inspiration must be held in suspense till the theory is determined. They suppose that the point at which the student must first go to work is to determine whether it is "verbal" or "substantial," whether God elected to employ the maximum or the minimum of miraculous elements to secure the accuracy of Holy Writ, whether Biblical writers lost themselves in the Spirit or whether their personal traits, education and peculiar mode of expression were appropriated by the Holy Spirit and used as they were found; whether historic events were refined out of the crudities of profane history and the then existing traditions, or directly given from the Lord; whether events and conversations of the time of the Biblical writer were miraculously represent-

†C. B. Cake in "The Current"; Chicago, Dec. 27, 1884.

ed to the writer, or whether he kept notes with a view to his purposed authorship, or only gave the substance of those conversations which are ostensibly verbatim, being preserved against error in essence and meaning, but not against deviation in mode of expression. Whether the inspiration of different parts of the Bible varies all the way from a passage from the very mouth of Jehovah, one hundred per cent verbal inspiration, to a genealogical document, copied from the archives by a clerk on routine duty.

It is said that a gentleman unacquainted with law, when called upon to preside over a court of law, asked some advice of Lord Mansfield. The advice was: When you are called upon for a ruling, give it directly, and firmly, according to your best judgment, and you will nearly always be right; but do not try to expound your reasons for a ruling, for in this you will nearly always be wrong. In the light of the fundamental proofs of the fact of inspiration it is hard to see how any can remain unsettled, excepting they have previously been spoiled through vain philosophy;* but when we leave the fact and undertake to expound the *modus operandi* of inspiration we are nearly sure to make some mistakes, because the acceptance of facts was God's original design for us, and the fa-

*Colossians 2:8.

cilities for constructing an adequate theory explaining the how of inspiration have not been placed in our hands. We would not on this account shut the door of research or hush the instinct of interrogation in the human mind; indeed we would not object to unfolding our views on all the questions above suggested, if space permitted; but we must hold ourselves to recognize that the main point of emphasis is in *the fact of inspiration,* which is gloriously settled; and if we do not know just how it took place, which we do not, this limitation need not affect the consistency and vigor of our faith.

INDISPENSABLE AND SUFFICIENT.

In every age there have been scriptures (writings) which served their purpose and perished, or were filed with the antiquities, but *the* Scriptures are inbreathed of God,* who knew that there was one branch of knowledge which could not be extorted from the bosom of nature, or built from the materials of this world. Man may begin with a hand full of pebbles and a string, and attain a system of mathematics by which he can measure the dimensions of the universe; but if he wishes to correct his own heart he must turn to the Word of God. He can begin

*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

with the primary laws of thought and write volumes of worldly wisdom; but if he wants reliable instruction in the way of righteousness he must turn to the Bible. He may synthesize the fragrance of flowers in his laboratory or coax the fruits of the field into high degrees of perfection; but he who is highest among created things must turn to the Most High when he would seek the perfection of his soul. This recourse to God is had through the exceeding great and precious promises of his word.* Man can find the fuel for his winters and tap the cooling veins of the earth for his summers; but when he wishes to furnish his life with good works and become skilled in the higher arts of service to God and man, he must take counsel from the Holy Scriptures.

The sufficiency of the Scriptures has been alluded to as an inductive proof that they came from God. He who claims that they need something added to fulfill the object for which they are given, proves his lack of acquaintance with their manifold instructions. Consciously or unconsciously, the writers of the libraries of the world have derived from this Book the best ideals of their own pro-

*2 Peter 1:3, 4. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

ductions, their most impressive imagery, together with the spirit of their strongest appeals and the keynote of their every psalm of hope. Take its influence out of the libraries of the world, and they would be sterile; take its influence out of the social life of the world and all ideals of human brotherhood would stagger into the shadows. Take its influence out of the political government of the world and the average civilized man would wish for death.

It is up to date. Like a highly polished mirror it reflects the scenes of the passing days; and when it does not supplement the intuitions of wise men so as to show them the major events of the world in advance of their arrival, it so interprets the output of time's revolving wheel that when events do come their meaning is more promptly defined and their issues more wholesomely solved by leaders who read and respect the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ATONEMENT AND MODERN THOUGHT.

The objection of the new theology to the atonement in the blood of Christ is based upon a new theory of man's relation to his Maker. The new theory of relationship between God and man is contingent upon the doctrine of spontaneous generation.

If we are to view man in a higher scale today than he has ever been before, if we are to think of his attainments in a line of gradual unfoldings, starting at zero, in archaic ages, and neglecting all epochs in his ascent, each millennium in our backward glance will show man less responsible, less amenable to law, and less capable of apprehending law, till the imagination follows him back to a stage of consummate innocency, with a negative sinlessness like that of a post or a head of cabbage. In line with this reasoning, sin means nothing but that man is below the standard. Not that he *was* above and *fell* below, but that he has never been above; he is only on his way up, and hence there rests upon the race no great generic blame, no "Adamic sin;" and no preternatural system

of evil exists in the world.* Man has not broken the law, but has simply come in sight of its ideals and begun to learn to keep it with uncertain degrees of constancy, which improves with the advance of centuries. Under this scheme, his responsibility is no higher at any juncture than his attainments. Not that individual offenders are to be excused; they may even be cut off, as false branches that spoil the symmetry of a tree in its growth; but sinners, even criminals, are to be regarded purely in the light of unfortunates, who have no part in the breaking of a fundamental law of the universe, who therefore need no atonement to make possible their recovery to rectitude and blessedness.† On this thought is built a doctrine of salvation through education and human uplift. The more favored members of the race are the saviors of the less favored. In this

*"The race was born with passions of animalism and self-will that were not sinful until the higher life of the spirit had become developed. But when the estate of genuine humanity had been reached, animalism and self-will were not normal to it, but were false and degrading elements, fatal to the higher life unless they were rejected; and through the consent of the human will to the now abnormal rule of lower powers, what had before been innocent passed into sin."

"An Outline of Christian Theology", p. 240. William Newton Clarke, D.D.

†So far from being new or exalted in its antecedents, this in substance is the same view on sin and atonement as held by Mohammedanism. With them it is said: "The potency of sin is not recognized; evil is only an individual, not an historical power; hence there is no need of redemption." "Islam: A Challenge To Faith," p. 120 Samuel M. Zwemer, F. R. G. S.

scheme Christ is indeed accorded the highest place; but he differs only in degree from other champions of human salvation. We follow him when we serve mankind unselfishly; and the unperishable magnitude of his influence at this point, including the climactic sacrifice in his death, makes him the leader of all leaders in the upward march of humanity, and justly entitles him to be called the Savior. In keeping with this thought, Christ's death was an unfortunate, unnecessary tragedy; but good has come out of it, because of its powerful appeal to motives of unselfish service; and that which need not have been becomes a mighty asset to the church as an incentive to noble service and a basis of appeal to erring humanity.

As for the hope of humanity, the salvage scheme of the new theology is characterized with undimmed optimism. In answering the question, "Watchman, what of the night?" it holds all the cordial that a heavy hearted inquirer could wish. The faithfulness of the church may hasten the realization of a sinner's hope, but nothing can finally defeat this realization. Human nature may be relied upon to reform and come to its own, somewhere down the line. If man has an immortal soul and a future life, inductions based upon the nature of God and the known instances of human response lead the new

theologian to say that there is a probation beyond the grave, in which, somewhere in the vale of mysterious shadows, every sinner will finally get to God.*

PRESCRIBING FOR THE WORLD'S EPIDEMIC.

Thus in brief have we stated modern religious thought in its effort to carry forward the allegiances of the past and connect the proposed Christian institutions of tomorrow with the revered, but discarded Christian institutions of yesterday. It will be seen that we have not undertaken to prejudice their case by an unfair emphasis or ironical description. While this statement cannot embody all the inflections of individual exponents of the new theology tendency, its terms in the mean would be proudly espoused by scores of the foremost instructors of theology in our seminaries and Biblical departments of Church colleges, as well as by a large number of forward looking city pastors, in evangelical denominations.

No one can deny the cleverness of the new theology plan of salvation. Its diagnosis of its patient's ailment is hypothetical; but, as-

*Even one who has been accorded a place in the orthodox class borrows this view from the "progressives" and handles sympathetically the theory that "it is not like God to fix a line beyond which he will not allow change, if change is possible in the nature of the case; that judgment upon the deeds done in the body, final so far as this life is concerned, does not preclude judgments upon future periods in their season; that the hints of Scripture in 1 Pet. 3:18-20, 4:6, denote in the apostolic mind the thought that change is possible in the life beyond." Ibid, 474.

suming the diagnosis to be correct, the remedy is rational and scientific; and the most inconsistent people in the world, religiously, are those evangelical Christians who are educated up to the Darwinian view of man's origin and still try to make place for an epoch of spiritual regeneration. While the rank and file of evolutionists may feel that their position on the nature of sin is in its substance final and conclusive, the profound philosophers who lead the procession of human thought are not quite so sure. With them, it is felt that another word may yet be spoken upon the meaning of sin, upon the weird mystery of heredity, along with the unexpounded metaphysics of the psychic world. But, while they wait for that more illuminating word, the old prescription rejected, there must be an emergency formula. The new theology gospel of social service and education is the emergency prescription for a very sick man, upon whom a diagnosis has been made, but one which, in the judgment of the greatest doctors, is not final, since it fails to demonstrate the origin of the trouble. But, painful as it is, in the mind of one who wishes to be expert in his profession, it sometimes becomes necessary to prescribe for an epidemic before the malady is perfectly understood. This prescription is called empirical. It is like grandmother's

treatment for appendicitis; it may help, but it does not cure.

The preachers of the old gospel which weathered the Roman persecutions of the first centuries after Christ, which turned cities upside down, to which we owe the founding of all the great mission movements of the pagan world, and which has sustained its martyrs in the lion's den and at the fiery stake, believe in education and social service. They rejoice that social service is being reduced to a finer art in this more enlightened day, and they recognize in it a child and a handmaid of the gospel of Christ. They are certain, however, that it may be a palliative but not a cure, and that he who in this connection would substitute the word "cure" has imposed a criminal deception upon a suffering world. Education and social service treat the *symptoms* of a disease which no human mind can comprehend, but which has been identified by our Maker, through his revealed word. It is held by the old gospel, and verified with a good show of success, that though sin is a disease whose symptoms will persist in this life, after the basic trouble has been healed, education and social service can relieve the symptoms, and that this indeed is their function. These movements of humanitarianism are good in their place, they are a fine emer-

gency prescription; but soothing syrups cannot take the place of cathartics, and ointments cannot remove gangrene. If the old gospel must go there must be a better substitute than has yet been found; but, since this gospel cost the supreme sacrifice of the Son of God, we may be sure that a better substitute is unavailable.

ATONEMENT BASED ON HUMAN NEED.

What is the gospel of the cross? Just as there is a modern thought denaturing or rejecting it, there is a modern thought apprehending it. It is not rational to say that the analogies by which we appreciate the atonement cannot be better understood. Nothing is gained by a dogged contention for the theoretical phases of the question, the inflections of the doctrine which do not affect the fact; and the orthodox writer who excites himself into seeing "logical" sequences from analogical premises, and who berates his brethren, either pro or con, upon irresistible grace, final perseverance, or the necessary content of substitution, need not feel that all who treat him as mediaeval do thereby class themselves as unorthodox and destructive. It will be in place at this time for us to go briefly into the essentials of the Biblical fact of the atonement.

Divine law is revealed to man, not evolved in human society. While man's appreciation

of this law has been progressive, he has known from the beginning its essential point, calling for obedience and loyalty.

We have no obligation to explain moral agency, which can only be understood in the light of a more perfect world; but man had the power to violate divine law, and he did so, early in the history of the race, placing himself subject to a penalty without which law could not exist; and, by the one act, bringing the entire race into an automatic condemnation.

Man not only placed himself subject to a penalty when he sinned, but the penalty went immediately into effect,* producing spiritual death. Spiritual death is a synonym for separation from God. It is the first, and only immediate penalty for sin. There are dire *consequences,* of every description, expressed in the words, "The way of transgressors is hard"†, "The wicked shall come to sheol,‡, and "These shall go away into everlasting punishment."**

Separation from God, which in the fact of the fall is the portion of the whole human race, has in itself no demerit, but it results from the demerit of sin. It followed man's

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*"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17. Cf. also Isaiah 59:2; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 1 John 3:8.

†Proverbs 13:15.

‡Psalm 9:17, R. V.

**Matthew 25:46.

sin as a direct execution of justice, to preserve the sanctity of law and the integrity of divine government. As a result of this separation there is a separateness of nature, a divergency from the will of God, in the heart of every child of man. This, we call depravity or original sin. The words of Paul could have meant no less than this when he said that in Adam all die, and all have come short of the glory of God.** We have ground to believe that this separateness of nature, resulting automatically in the fact that man is separated from God, is also enhanced by the direct perverting energy of Satan. The situation is therefore so complex that no one can analyze and expound "original sin." To assume the universal sinfulness of man is necessary to make intelligible the class of utterances bearing upon the subject in the Scriptures. It is necessary to explain the universality of the atonement revealed in the Scriptures,* and the universality of the need of justification by faith,† which proofs are valid only to those who believe the Bible.

EVOLUTION'S FAILURE TO EXPLAIN.

But, laying the Bible aside, the inherent sinfulness of man is the only explanation for the universal trend to perverse conduct, base

**1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:3.

*John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:15; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 John 2:2.

†Romans 3:19-31.

actions, and violation of natural and moral law, in every human tribe on earth. Nowhere among the creatures below man do we find a widespread inherent tendency to violate the laws of their being. In this respect the chasm is measureless, between the most innocent human tribe and the most degenerate species of animals; the animals, following the bent of their nature, unrestrained, come out as animals ought to come; but the people, unbridling their tempers, their lusts and their avarice, go in as men and come out as devils. If the evolutionary hypothesis were true, of the ascent of human tribes by radiating sectors from primal apes, we should expect occasionally, on some side of the earth, to find a tribe of people who had not strayed any farther from the laws of their being than have the apes; and we should expect, also, to find some of the tribes of higher civilization in whom evolution had done its best, arriving at a high level of hereditary rectitude, where simple training could insure universal virtue. But in this latter field of proof the new theology's explanation of sin breaks down more seriously than elsewhere; for it is almost invariably the case that people in the middle walks of life, with medium attainments, are naturally freer from diabolism and perverse living than the upper strata of society.

THE SYMBOLISM OF BLOOD.

While the principle of sacrifice and substitution is deeply written in the analogies of nature and the annals of human history, all that we know about a divinely conferred atonement is what we learn from the Scriptures. When they say that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin,* and carry that assumption consistently through the era of tuitionary types, to be climaxed in the voluntary suffering, as an alleged necessity,† of Him around whom all sacred writings find their center of gravity; when they find in the blood of the most worthy One a mysterious voice of authority by which alone ultimate deliverance may come to the souls of men,‡ the human philosopher may be amazed; but only he who denies the existence of mystery will set himself to making light of that which he cannot understand. A tribe is growing up today, very near the altars of the sanctuary, who are so sure that the saints of all ages have made a one hundred per cent mistake in their faith in blood atonement that they are free to laugh in derision at the crude contrition of their brethren. It is wondered how the same generation could contain such

*Leviticus 17:11; Hebrew 9:22.
†John 10:17, 18; Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; 9:12; Luke 9:22; Acts 17:3; Hebrew 9:16; Daniel 9:26.
‡Hebrew 12:24; 9:14; 10:12.

extremes of deficient and ample attainment; could hold a class of people so far behind the norm of truth and a class so well up. But we might be reminded that a religion whose refinements left out the revolting symbolisms of blood is not exclusively new and modern,** nor does it necessarily follow that its champions have reached a more dependable plane in their ideals of kindness, mercy and justice.*

DOGMATISM AND ITS CONTRAST.

A fact is a theory which has reached the experimental stage; which has been verified by the tests of a unanimous jury. A theory, if correct, is a symbol or apprehension of a yet unrealized fact. A matter may therefore exist in the form of theory, espoused or rejected, in one segment of humanity, when it has taken the proportions of a fact with another class. Such, for instance, was the Copernican "theory" that the sun is the center of the solar system. When this first began to take the place of the Ptolemaic theory that the earth was the center of the solar system, there were two

**"In process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering. But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." Genesis 3:3-5.

*"And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell .... And Cain talked with his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him." Genesis 4:5-8.

schools of thought; but, finally, that which though seemingly a fact, had never been anything but an illusion, was forced out of recognition, as the world received a mathematical demonstration of the Copernican "theory." Today we are so friendly to the doctrine that none but a Parson Jasper would feel like using the word theory. It is a fact. Here is the province of dogmatism. Dogmatism consists in that note of confidence with which an individual announces a fact, as distinguished from the spirit of investigation and tolerance in the tone with which he announces a theory. A dogmatist, in the worse sense of that word, is one who allows no quarters to his audience when he announces a theory. Some of our modern instructors want their students to come with "open minds," meaning that they would have them scrap their facts with their theories and start anew. The thought is, that the spirit of the age demands freedom from dogmatism; but this is a fallacy. The age demands facts, and the ear-mark of a message from a man who has the facts is a kind of serene, respectful dogmatism. This kind of authority is what gave power to the words of Christ.* If I know that I am seated on a chair, I gain nothing for the reputation of scientific discourse by weighing the specu-

*Mark 1:22.

lations of men who wish to take my time and the time of the audience asking me to make sure that it is not a boulder. A theological professor who asks a student to treat as untrue and prove again the experiences of grace which are in his heart or the fact of the atonement and the essential verities of the gospel which have been confirmed by a million witnesses and tested thousands of times in the audiences of mankind, has required his student to stultify himself. The way to study theology is to put down the facts as a posit and build around them; not lay them down and go off with "open mind" and leave them, promising to return and take them up when school is out, provided we do not find something that suits us better. If a man is led to commit such a presumptuous blunder he is sure to find something that suits him better, for when a man tampers with his faculty of perception it goes back on him and puts him in a world where things are not what they seem.

MEANING OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

As Christians, we are authorized to tell people that Jesus Christ died for them. This is found to attract attention everywhere. There is a catchword in this announcement that human psychology may account for. It is like many other wonderful and beautiful

things that have happened in the history of mankind; and as such it marks a line of thought that never fails to impress the finer sentiments and move the emotions of the unsophisticated; of all, indeed, but those whose glutted ears have spoiled the law of reaction in their souls. Naturally, the New Testament announcement of Christ's death exceeds all similar sacrifices in its appeal because of its compass of sympathy; and the sincerity and intelligence of this vast scheme of substitution is confirmed in his deliberate appraisal of all human beings, which preceded the tragic transaction, and in the coolly wrought out program for carrying to the last man due information of the efficient sacrifice which was being made in his behalf. Both of these measures were revolutionary in their day. The world was made up of castes; and the thought of an equal intrinsic worth of the soul of a slave and the soul of a king* was exotic. It was peculiar to Jesus Christ; there was nothing in the soil of the human thinking of the times that would have produced it. It included that thought of the equality of the rights of labor and capital and of the equal footing of man and woman before the door of opportunity, which has characterized the higher civilization of our day. The concept

*Revelation 1:6; 5:10.

in the opening words of the American "Declaration of Independence"* could hardly have been sprung in the human mind had it not been initiated and fostered as the rational background of the purpose of Jesus Christ to lay down his life for "the whole world." And as for the publicity program, the plan of "world evangelism," which Christ coupled with this theory of human worth, his view of the value of souls and the reach of his vision into the future made that so ambitious in its aspects, so unlike the wildest dream of any living sage, that the human imagination of his time could only grasp at it, without being able to entertain it.

But in accounting for the effect on the human mind, produced by the Gospel's main announcement, that Christ died for us, we are called to appreciate another law. Deeper than the natural appeal of unselfish sacrifice, deeper than the revolutionary effect of his levelling appraisal of mankind, is that heavenly mystery of the atonement, upon which the human mind, unspoiled by vain philosophies, so readily lays hold by a kind of intuition. There is something wonderful, a wisdom superhuman, involved in the death of Christ. This is attested by the thousands of volumes in which the wise men of the cen-

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

turies have tried to interpret the mystery, or make it sufficiently available for mankind to realize upon its provisions. It was so outstanding in its significance that prophets foresaw it and spoke of it with a wisdom not of themselves or of their time. We are not certain but that angels have been students of the philosophy of the atonement.†

THE UNDISPUTED FACTS.

The early church had less leisure for investigation and was more serene in the presence of mystery, perhaps because they witnessed more mysteries and were not flushed with so much success in the field of analysis as is the modern man. At any rate, they confined themselves to preaching the atonement as a fact, under the slogan that Christ died for us; and they gained much by their concentration and simplicity.* The greatest breach in Christendom grew out of a departure from this, when the philosophy of the converted Greek mind undertook to elaborate and extend the Scriptural analogies upon the subject and insist upon their having an essential logical sequence.

There are two lists of utterances upon the atonement; one under the head of *facts* and the other under the head of *theories*. These maxims are not disparate, and it is not im-

†1 Peter 1:12.
*1 Peter 2:24: Isaiah 53.

possible for an item under the latter head to be shoved up to a place under the former, according to the rule by which theories turn to facts. But the atonement is such a divine affair that its facts are patent, and theories usually are destined to remain theories till we go hence into the realm of more perfect understanding.

The utterances of New Testament preachers may be safely accepted as facts. They taught:

1. That the atonement made by Christ necessitated his suffering and death;

2. That it was an extreme demand growing out of the fact that the whole human race was fallen and hopeless;

3. That the one making the atonement had and must have unique qualifications—divine attributes for the sake of worthiness and human attributes for the sake of mediatorial fitness;

4. That the one making the sacrifice must make it voluntarily on his own part, as well as by bequest or free gift on the part of the Godhead with which he was identified;

5. That the atonement was a measure in the mind of God long before its execution, to meet an anticipated need;

6. That it was adequate in its merit and efficiency to save from the lowest depth of

sin to the highest level of holiness and happiness.

These are the facts undisputed in the main channel of the Christian system from the beginning; and there is no change of verbiage or new statement for the sake of modern modes of thought that can budge one of these unequivocal facts without introducing a process which will infallibly denature the Christian religion. Two more "facts" may be added, which received the cool treatment of mere theories for a long period but which were evidently assumed among the earliest preachers of the gospel and which are rapidly gaining the support of the exponents of the gospel in this modern, practical age with its feeling of internationalism and human equality. They are these:

7. The atoning blood of Christ has full provisional value for every human being, and all may accept its benefits.

8. Its benefits are conditional, to all who are able to meet conditions of obedience and faith; and all who are able to meet the simple conditions and neglect or refuse to do so shall fail to realize any benefit from the death of Christ excepting the stay of execution which they will have enjoyed during their days of grace.

Frequently in this study our references have included passages of Scripture plainly

supporting one or another of this list of facts; but we are simply giving the New Testament as our proof text for this formal list of axiomatic positions on the atonement, which are accepted without question by the great bulk of active, orthodox Christians in the world today.

THE MOOTED QUESTIONS.

The theories of the atonement ask the questions: Is justice absolute, or is it only relative, having no abstract existence? Is the justice, therefore, which made impossible the sinner's recovery without an atonement purely rectoral, something that inheres in government; and does this alone make necessary the punishment of sin, or is there a mysterious something in the very nature of God which makes true the assertion that God must punish sin in order to be true to his perfect nature? The doctrine of relative justice belongs to the "governmental theory" and the doctrine of absolute justice belongs to the "substitution theory." In the less modern centuries we had theologians who thoroughly understood those distinctions, who saw no middle ground, and spent much time on the metaphysics of the question. But later, theologians began to appear who saw satisfaction analogies in the governmental theory, and governmental analogies in the satisfaction theory. We are to-

day more modest in denying remote conceptions that we cannot disprove, and carrying analogies into identities, as if an analogy were a photographic exposure of the real thing instead of a suggestive mode of apprehension not applying at all points. We know that God's thoughts are higher than ours, and that we are such lame thinkers that we have to go on crutches, made from the timber of every day experience; that we have to pass from the known to the unknown in a very childish way, and that we should be modest on the theoretical side. Men on crutches should not strut. Perhaps rectoral justice is also absolute and absolute justice is rectoral. Perhaps man is mistaken when he thinks he can conceive of a period antedating the time when God first had a government, with intelligent subjects whose relation to each other and to him had to be standardized in terms of law.

The theories of the atonement ask the question, further: Is separation from God the only decreed penalty for sin for which an atoning Savior would be needed to find a remedy? Are all the other consequences of sin, the miseries of life and the horrors of perdition, automatic, following as a sequence similar to natural law, so that a man goes to hell by a kind of gravitative necessity, because of the fact that he is not fit for heaven

and for no other reason? One form of the governmental theory answers yes; the satisfaction theory in its old standard form knows no difference between an event of natural law, a "consequence," and a direct fiat of divine will as when man sinned and was cut off. It knows no "permissive providence"; and all the afflictions that a sinner brings upon himself are sent of God because they were eternally involved in the organization of the universe. So, also, his banishment into hell is an act of the great Judge. On this theory, the atonement in Christ was accepted as an equivalent sacrifice in substitution for our deserts in hell as well as our penalty of separation from God.

SUBSTITUTION.

So far as we know the philosophical aspects of the atonement which take rise from the above questions were never even considered by the preachers and writers of the early church. Substitution, where life is given for life, or imprisonment taken for imprisonment, is impossible under the more perfect modern theory of government; for a citizen's life is "unalienable", as is his liberty also. This is because he owes himself to society, and cannot ignore this debt to assume that of some other. But if the individual were to come in from another realm, having none of these obligations on his own account,

the situation would be different, and he could give his life or liberty in substitution for another. The grandfather of this writer, having no military obligations, because he was below military age, gave himself in 1815 in one of America's greatest defensive battles, to be shot at as a substitute for a man who had a family and was subject to conscription. Substitution prevails today also in the discharge of civil obligations, where the state lays a requirement upon its citizens of a certain age, and where the substitution is offered by exempted citizens or citizens of another state. Equivalent substitution is also true to governmental precedents, as when some years ago an indigent citizen of a certain nation was sentenced to banishment for an offense, the alternative being ten thousand pounds in gold. A wealthy relative, not known in the community of the condemned man, came down and surprised the court by paying the ten thousand pounds, which, by the way, he had inherited from an ancestry which was common to him and his poor relative.

The references of the New Testament compel us to concede that these analogies of equivalent substitution are on some scale germane for setting forth atonement in Christ. The mistake has been in trying to be too exact in insisting upon the "logic" of

the analogy. Analogies have no logic. Wherever they fit they are available, and where they fail to fit they are annulled. The great mass of old style writers have reasoned that if Christ was our substitute the substitution must have been in the nature of paying all penalties, which amounted to a man's absolution before he was born and made his salvation inevitable and his regeneration non-forfeitable if he should be among the elect. Whatever may be the direction of truth in the questions of election and final perseverance, modern thought is entirely too practical to accept a view that exempts men from obligation and makes inevitable the salvation of all for whom Christ died. Such a position forces us to say one of two things: That Christ died for only part of the race and that the damnation of the rest is decreed; or that Christ died for all and the salvation of all is decreed, regardless of their impenitence. Both positions are so destructive to true evangelism and paralyzing to the untrammelled better judgment of our day that they are found only in musty creeds, to be recited by the habitually devout in their absent minded moments.

It is here, in matters beyond the human understanding, that Christendom has wasted its strength in centuries of division; but this is a valley in which the Christianity of

today is unwillng to sojourn and waste the time that it should devote to its appointed task. We may study dispassionately these metaphysical intricacies; but no longer can we let them be sources of friction without condemning ourselves before the world and at the bar of our own moral judgment. Back to the unity of pentecost in our purposes, and back to the simplicity of the apostles in our expression, should be the watchword of all contenders for the faith.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOSPEL PROGRAM.

It is agreed that the death of a divine Savior was necessary, to provide salvation for man. This divine Savior has died; and now all men are provisionally saved. All men are saved, except as they lose themselves by personal sin. Adam's sin, though its effects linger with us in the weird mystery of "original sin," can damn no one. Its legal result is unconditionally removed in the vicarious death of the Son of God.* But though the decree of the fall is provisionally ended by one stroke of a Savior's love, the effect of it in human society is an open sore; and the mighty agencies of moral and spiritual destruction occasioned by man's break with God cannot be dismissed in a day. Moreover, it is sad to say that these agencies of destruction cannot be stemmed in time to avert the eternal loss of countless thousands whose blood is on fire with the spirit of evil and whose minds are too dark to apprehend the plan of salvation.

The main task of the church is to publish the good news, to let men know that they

*Romans 5:19; 1 Corinthians 15:22.

are saved through the death of Christ; and that now they have the privilege to hand themselves over to the restoring agencies of heaven and turn their faces back toward their lost paradise. Modern orthodox thought makes much of the restoring agencies of heaven. It sticks to the contention that blood atonement for sin was necessary; but it is not unanimous in supposing that blood atonement was necessary for the repair of misfortunes, the enrichment of poverty, the binding of broken hearts, the healing of disease, the dispelling of ignorance, and the restoration of Edenic glory. It is easy to believe that angels can do those things when the right is given them by blood divine—when the sinner gets by the cherubim and flaming sword that guard the gates against guilt. If a man could have fallen over the battlements of heaven, down into some quagmire of material corruption, and become battered and helpless, and if his calamity could have been overlooked for a millennium, until he had lost touch with heavenly light and his intelligence had become encased in confusion and ignorance, there would have been no need for any to die in his behalf as a vindication of justice or to protect the integrity of divine government in bringing him back. Angels could have spanned the chasm and brought with

them all things necessary for the man's recovery. There would have been a thousand different agencies of repair available in the kingdom above. So, we may say, only man's break with God, and not his innocent miseries, has cost the blood of God's dear Son.* And once this legal barrier of condemnation is surmounted, through repentance and faith in Christ, man's lost inheritance is restored; and heaven's resources are as open to him as if he had never sinned; and heaven's agencies will address themselves to repairing the wreck as rapidly as the wrecking crews can connect up with the various scenes of disaster.

What angels are having to do with the gospel program we cannot say.** They are a force in the background, an unseen host, available as God may will.† Perhaps they have no direct part in the ministry of the gospel proper. But after the gospel has been published and accepted, we have reason to believe that they are eager allies with the "wrecking crew," which represents no small part of the gospel program. When receiving the atonement for sin one becomes an heir; and heaven shows great eagerness that everything necessary to his restoration should be supplied.‡

*1 Peter 3:18; Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:12-14.
*Heb. 1:14; Matt. 4:11.
†Mat. 26:53; 2 Kings 6:15-17.
‡Romans 8:32; 2 Peter 1:3.

The ministry of human relief, uplift, and education, is a distinct department in the mission of Christ and the task of world evangelism, a distinct department. In theory it is event number two, ultimately worthless without salvation from sin, and very disappointing in its results. But it may progress along side the direct dispensing of the good news, serving as a nucleus to reflect the light, as an illustration to corroborate the gospel message in the mind of the multitude, and as a concrete inducement for men to turn from idols and serve the living God.

The "wrecking crew" needs no credentials, excepting to be free from the marks of selfishness and to have a respectable qualification for its task. By this sentence we mean to say that the vast field of human relief and uplift may be entered by any person or group of persons or cult or government. And it is quite natural that an impulse in this direction should be felt by many, especially since Christianity has imparted the vision of service to the world and begotten the impulse. Works of mercy and human relief have been taking form in the better civilization ever since the Master introduced his examples of sympathy and relief in Palestine and Phoenicia. From the impulse of the first Christian revival grew the world's first hospitals and asylums for the unfortu-

nate. But we are only playing with the reconstruction and relief of a race broken by the fall, as compared with the restoration program of God and the angels* after this broken race has made confession of sin and, being reconciled to God through faith in the merit of the atonement, has acknowledged the Lordship of Jesus Christ. To get people Scripturally converted may not be as big a showing to the superficial observer as to get them scrubbed and doctored and educated; but it takes this conversion to put them in line for the major program of reconstruction which God has scheduled for the age to come; an age which they cannot even enter except as they have salvation in Christ. The repairs that human organizations can bring to a race which has suffered breakage by the fall are ample to show a loving heart; but they are quite inadequate. And as for the uplift, we can only bring them to the level where we are, which in the case of many a social service movement will mean but little in terms of spiritual values.

INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE.

First and foremost, the program of the gospel is to preach the good news to every creature.† The assumption is that every responsible creature, in order to be saved, must

*Revelation, Chapters 21 and 22.
†Mark 16:15.

believe the gospel; and it is impossible for one to believe a thing that has not been introduced to him.* Ignorance and faith are incompatible. It does not follow that all who hear shall be expected to believe. They must have more than the mere announcement or even the urgent discourse indicated by the word "preach." They must have the evidence in the form of witnesses, whose life and speech proclaim the power of Christ to save from sin. The responsibility for serving in this capacity and inciting humanity on valid grounds to trust Christ's provision for their salvation and follow him is not confined to an ordained ministry. Every one who is saved through Christ goes automatically upon the invitation committee, becoming himself a sample of the work and a witness with a personal knowledge of facts to reinforce the proclamation.†

"State what you know in this case" is the method by which the courts give recognition to one in the capacity of a witness. It refers to a knowledge resultant from personal experience and not from inductive conclusions. This also is the "knowledge" of the Bible; and a witness is one who knows. In earlier apostolic times the word witness referred to one who had seen Jesus personally; but this high function was widened to make

*Romans 10:14.
†Acts 1:18; Matthew 5:14-16; 2 Corinthians 3:2.

eligible the discipleship of all the centuries to come, when they shall have met the condition for the fulness of the blessing of the gospel in their own souls.‡ The simple situation is, there is in all the world one remedy for sin, and we have found it. In finding it we found attached to it an order to bear the information of our find to the last man, and to supplement this information by personally showing what the remedy had done for us. An innate law of propriety should have saved us from a quietness which would have made our salvation virtually a secret reserved for our selfish use, a quietness which must condemn us either as being abnormal or as having missed in our own soul the deeper meaning of the secret. The Great Commission does not ask the Church to assimilate an alien mental state or fuse into its life a new set of emotions. It tallies with the feeling of every truly awakened heart and only reinforces us with an added excuse and an authority from higher up, for coming to the tribes of earth exactly as the better dictates of human nature would have us come.

RESULTS THAT WE MAY EXPECT.

The painful slowness with which the gospel claims response from the human race is due to one of three things: As in the last

‡Acts 5:32; 1:8.

stage of drowning, the race is so badly depleted in the effect of the fall that it is morally unable to perceive an agent of rescue and so maddened as to make the work of rescue a dangerous adventure; or, the agencies of rescue are down in their efficiency by not being duly saved from that from which they are seeking to save their fellows—the rescuing swimmers are strangled; or, there is some mistake about this sublimely conceived plan of salvation and we must set about looking for a better way. The latter hypothesis has influenced many an ill advised educator and reformer; but it is too late even to consider an agency that proposes to rival Jesus Christ in presenting to all mankind the ideal that challenges and the agency that saves. The two former explanations are sufficient to account for the slowness of the spread of the gospel, and each stricture bears in its very face the evidence of fact, which would retard the success of any salvage movement that infinite wisdom could produce, the same as it frustrates the gospel program.

But how, and to what extent, are we warranted in hoping to overcome this in the sweet by and by, and to have the kingdoms of this world become our Lord's?* Any one fairly informed with reference to God should know without consulting a document that he

*Revelation 11:15.

will finish what he has begun. The doctrine of personal freedom applies to individuals, but divine decrees are back of policies and involved in the destiny of nations and the orbit in which worlds must swing. Throughout the pages of Holy Writ the fortune of the world is told, the destiny of devil, the fate of the Man of Sin, the future of Christ, together with all who follow him and choose to have their destiny bound up with him.†

True, the mills grind slowly; and worthy authorities differ as to the relative part to be played by the activities of the church and the cataclysms at the coming of the Lord and the end of the age; but none who read the inspired fortune Book can doubt that it promises success to the enterprise of the Redeemer, whatever may be the unrepaired casualties of the fall in the form of lost souls; and this is the one grievous misfortune that ultra optimists have tried in vain to evade.*

Whatever may be one's tentative views as to the situation that must characterize the end of this age, and however his temperament and conviction may incline him to fear a climax of carnage, the gospel program should be put on foot as if he expected to be

†Isaiah 11; Zechariah 14; Daniel 2:44; 12:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 11:15; 19:19, 20; 20:1, 2.
*Psalm 9:17; Matthew 10:28; 25:46; Luke 16:26.

crowned ultimately with one hundred per cent success. It is the power of God unto salvation. It has saved as discouraging and improbable cases as any now dwelling amid the fellowships of ignorance and vice. It must, by the decree of its author, be published among all nations before the history of this age can be written.† Just after the Master gave two discouraging parables accounting for the *slow* progress of the gospel because of the depraved and unresponsive situation of the human heart‡ and the malignant intelligence that opposes** it, he reassures us with two more parables,*** forecasting the *sure* progress of the gospel. That "the gates of hell", the aggressive forces of evil, shall not prevail against the church of Christ seems to be a divine decree, independent of the mistakes of its human custodians. These may be set aside and deprived of their charter; the invisible ark may not continue in the same camp; the leadership in world evangelism may be transferred tomorrow from the hand of those who held it yesterday; thousands may prove unfaithful to their trust and lose their crowns; but "many shall be purified and made white and tried";

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†Mark 13:10.
‡The parable of the sower; Matthew 13.
**Parable of the tares; Ibid.
***The mustard seed and the leaven; Ibid.

and though in the sifting time workers may drop out of the ranks, and though the grim reaper shall take his annual toll even from the ranks of the faithful; God, who anon may change his workers, will carry on His work.

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